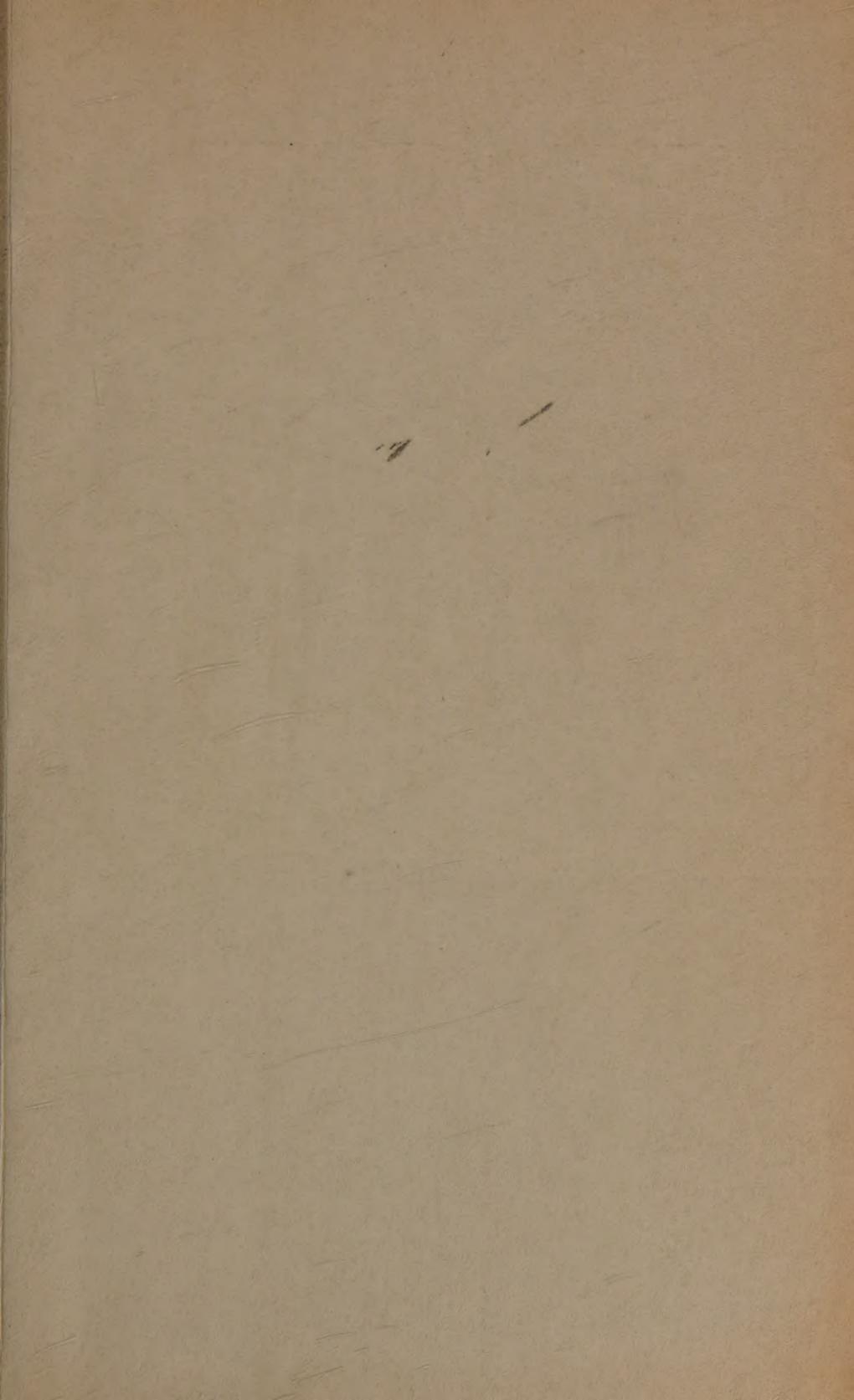




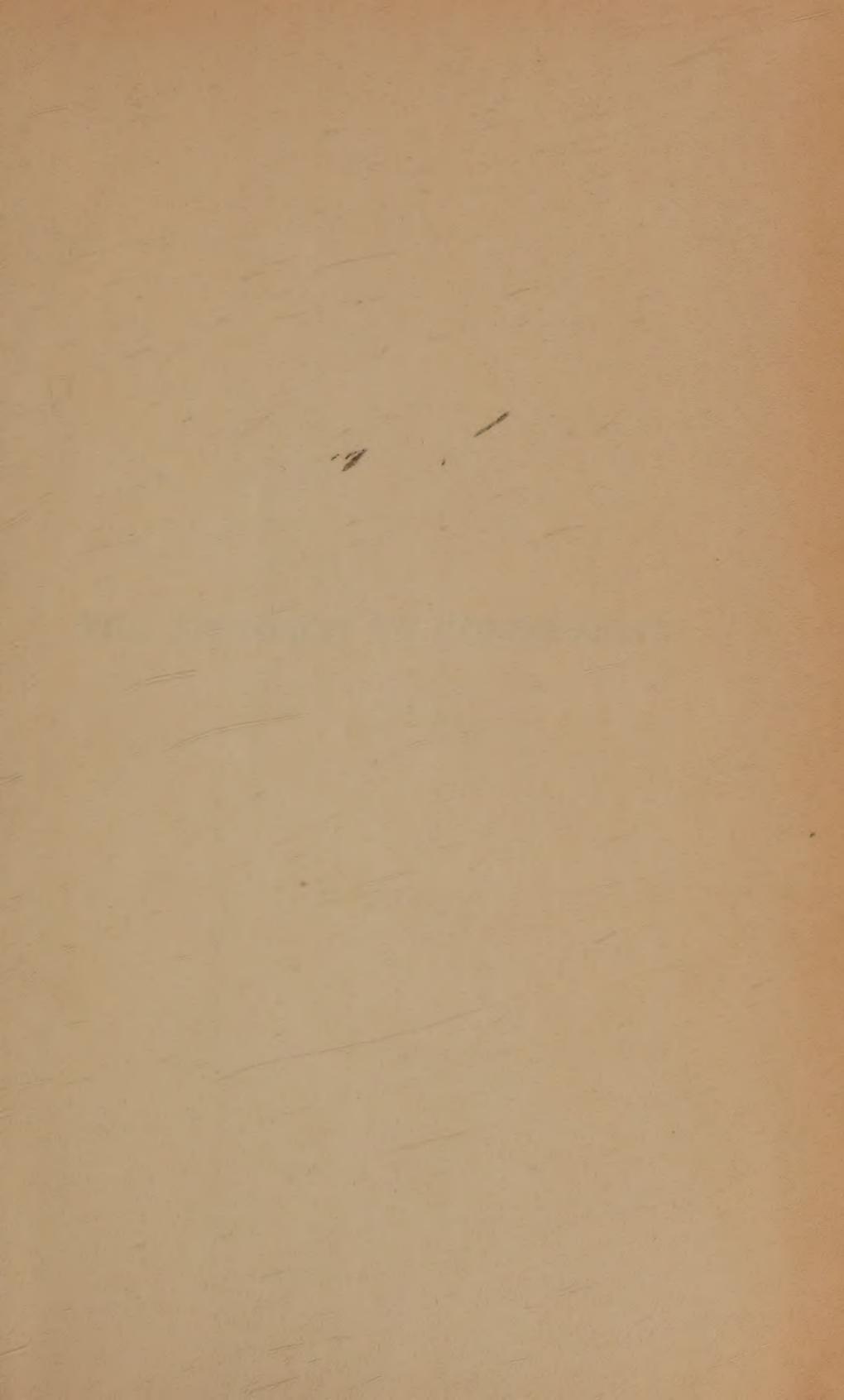
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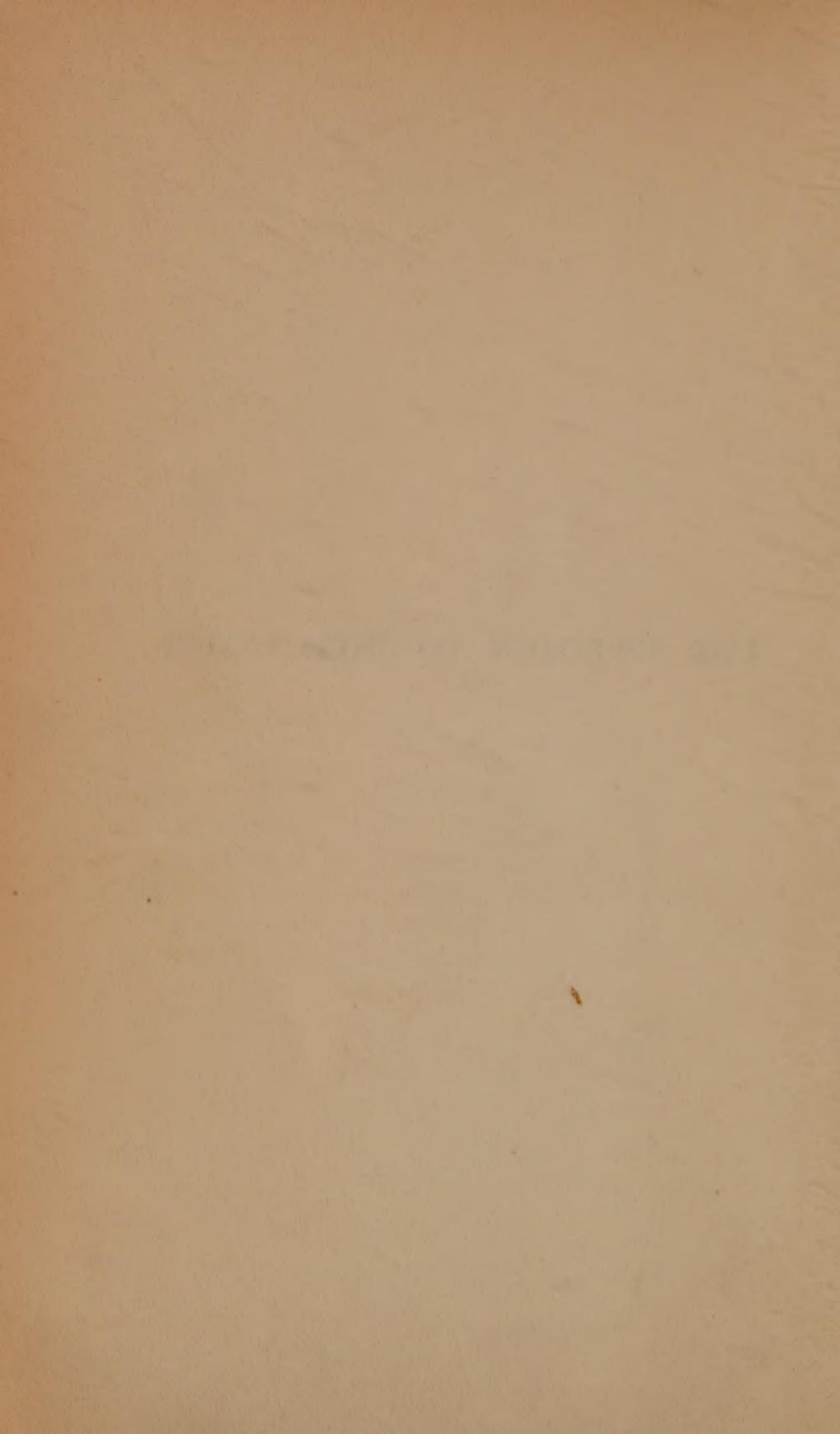








THE APPROACH TO CHRISTIANITY



# THE APPROACH TO CHRISTIANITY

BY

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## PREFACE

THIS book is an expansion of lectures originally given some three years ago in Portsmouth and Chichester ; and certain sections of it have since appeared as articles in *Theology*. The time spent in completing the work has enabled me in the interval to profit by criticisms and to make use of some books and articles not published when the volume was planned ; and if the unity of the book has to some extent suffered by delay, I hope that this may be compensated for by greater maturity in the result.

The first three chapters are concerned with the argument from religious experience. This is the line of intellectual approach to Christianity most characteristic of modern apologetic ; and it has been welcomed by philosophers as affording a valuable contribution towards vindicating the truth of religion. I have endeavoured in these pages to define and justify this argument afresh, to show its bearing on the conception of Revelation and of Authority, and to indicate its relation to the study of Theology. My debt to the late Baron von Hügel's *Essays and Addresses in the Philosophy of Religion*, with its powerful witness to the reality of the Supernatural, will be obvious to the reader ; indeed it was as I read that work that the plan of this volume shaped itself in my mind. Chapters IV to VII are more definitely theological. If the first part of the apologist's task is to show the general reasonableness of the grounds of belief, its second part is to set forth the distinctive articles of this belief in a way which will commend them to thoughtful men. My desire is to reach, if possible, that large circle of readers, of very varying persuasions, for whom truth in religion is of paramount interest and importance, and who are prepared to listen to orthodoxy no less than to Modernism and to weigh the

claims of both. It is sometimes assumed that at this tribunal the case has been already judged, and judged in favour of Modernism. I do not believe this to be the case. Rather, the truth is that Modernism is symptomatic of the need men feel for a synthesis between the old and the new in the advancing life and thought of the Church ; and it is this need which I have had constantly in mind. In the last chapter, accordingly, an attempt is made to show the essentially synthetic character of Anglican theology in relation both to various types of religious life and to the progress of knowledge ; and also to re-assert for the word Anglo-Catholic that large and ample meaning which current controversy tends so easily to obscure. I have already spoken of my debt to Baron von Hügel. My obligations to others will in the main be clear from the foot-notes. But I should like to express my particular thanks to my former diocesan, Bishop Talbot, for reading and criticizing the last chapter ; to my friends and contemporaries, the Rev. J. K. Mozley and Mr. Will Spens, for a similar service in connexion with the earlier chapters ; to the Rev. W. K. Lowther Clarke, the Editorial Secretary of S.P.C.K., whose collaboration with me in *Theology* has been a constant stimulus to learning ; and to Mrs. Beardall for kindly compiling the index. At the same time I must not appear to make anyone but myself responsible for the substance of the book as it stands. I am very conscious of its shortcomings : but I hope that it may be found to contribute in some degree towards exhibiting the rational basis and coherence of the Christian Faith and the sanity of that proportion in which it is embodied in the Church of England.

E. G. SELWYN.

August 6, 1925.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY : THE APPROACH TO CHRISTIANITY

Eadem tamen, quae didicisti, doce, ut cum dicas nove, non dicas nova.—VINCENT DE LERINS.

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What you can do, and what you ought to do, is to make such changes in the habits of men that those things which seemed natural and inevitable to their forefathers shall seem monstrous and avoidable to their children.  
—LORD BALFOUR.

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In all finite quantity there is an infinite, in all measure of time an eternal ; and the latter are the basis, the substance, the true and abiding reality of the former.—COLERIDGE.

As the years of the Great War recede and the fever of social and economic disturbance which were its immediate aftermath subsides, men's minds are beginning more and more to find time and room in which to reflect on experience and to settle their orientation for the future. This is a process which it is difficult, if not impossible, to stop short of the ultimate questions of human life—those which concern the significance of the individual, his place in the order of nature and society, and his relation to whatever spiritual reality or realities there may be. For people more and more find that the most pressing of the personal or public problems of our time—problems of vocation both for themselves and their children, of marriage and birth-control, of the just balance between moral and medical considerations in the battle with disease, of the conditions of industrial co-operation between employers and employed—have a way of burking solution on their own merits alone in isolation, and point the mind on always one step further to some range of facts, experiences, and principles which lie beyond themselves. This is the reason why we find the Church

to-day so widely criticized—not by those whose religious or political animosities might make it natural—but by men and women of good-will. There is, it is true, a very general readiness to accept the Church, at least for the time being, as a great national institution whose primary concern is precisely with those spiritual issues now felt to be so vitally at stake, and to look to it to bring forth, as a wise householder, from its treasure things new and old. Its ministry of courage and sympathy in the war—a ministry carried on so largely by the laity—its resolute attempt to overhaul its machinery, and the poverty of its clergy, have all alike conspired to secure for it a time at least of tolerance and quiet regard. And to a large extent judgment is being held in suspense. At the same time criticism, and insistent criticism, is very commonly expressed by thoughtful people; and it would be wrong as well as foolish to disregard it. For it is the criticism of sons and daughters, not of aliens. They desire more assurance, not less, that the Church is what it claims to be, the repository of the riches of Christ, the representative of Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. In other words their question is, “Are these things so? Can we any longer believe the main principles of the Church’s teaching, and follow the main lines of practice which it enjoins?” And often, for want of answer, the good-will, which should naturally lead to common action under clear leadership, tends to dissipate itself in bewilderment; and the sense of direction so much desired is not supplied.

This situation is one that offers striking contrast with that which prevailed before the war. Issues then seemed to be clear; and society was buoyed up by a kind of religious philosophy, which, though not Christian, was sufficiently like it on the surface to capture the imagination of a large proportion of the public, and sufficiently dominant to compel men to range themselves on one side or the other. This philosophy may be summed up in the word Progress. That word was the symbol of a practical working faith, which is one of the most outstanding features of the Edwardine Age. I use the term the “Edwardine Age” deliberately. We hear much

about the Victorian Age and much about the Modern Age, sometimes called Georgian. But we hear far too little about that other clearly marked period which was roughly coeval with the reign of King Edward VII. And yet it was a remarkable time. The old Queen was succeeded on the Throne by a King whose personality became a factor of moment in international politics ; and while one Government laid the foundation of our security in the Far East, another healed the age-long wound which had embittered our relations with France. At home the release from war in South Africa was the signal for a great revival of trade ; and the decade which followed was one of unexampled material prosperity. At the same time the seeds of universal compulsory education were beginning to bear fruit ; and it was no hard matter to awaken large new *strata* of the population to political consciousness, and to persuade them that, after a few more years of legislation, the Kingdom of God would have come. There are some who think that the upshot of this period would have been civil war, if a more universal tragedy had not supervened. But, be that as it may, it is unquestionable that the great legislative output of those years—including, among constructive measures, the beginnings of National Insurance, the South African Constitution, and the organization of the Territorial Force—had the general faith and feeling of English democracy behind it ; and that the tide of democratic progress showed little sign of abating, when events in Europe raised the signal of alarm.

The task of formulating the principles underlying widespread popular sentiments like that which sustained this movement is inevitably difficult ; and any exhaustive attempt to do so would involve tracing back the main tendencies of English thought for some generations. Yet we may, I think, discern behind the Edwardine faith in Progress the influence of a very definite assumption—the assumption, namely, that the long feud between religion and science was closed, and that the reconciliation between them could be rendered immediately fruitful. By science I mean the ordered knowledge of the external or phenomenal

world. The departments of scientific knowledge which lent themselves most readily to the matter in hand in those years were biology and economics ; but there lay behind them the whole method and outlook of science which had vindicated itself in a score of other fields. In the reconciliation now established religion was to provide the driving-power through its proclamation of the Kingdom of God as the ideal end of social activity, while science was to contribute its knowledge, foresight, and control of natural forces. And it was reckoned that this alliance was natural enough, since scientific thought inevitably involved, and contained within itself, precisely those judgments of worth and value which are so vital to religion. Progress was, in fact, the name given to evolution, when it reached the civilized plane ; and Christianity could be made to fall into line at once, through postulating "the Kingdom of God" as the goal to which the evolutionary process was leading.

This Edwardine synthesis marked a great change from the thought of a generation earlier. Only as late as 1894, T. H. Huxley had asserted the essential conflict between evolution and civilization, and said that the moral process cut right across the biological process and was at war with it. His haunting words may well be quoted :

"That which lies before the human race is a constant struggle to maintain and improve, in opposition to the State of Nature, the State of Art of an organized polity ; in which, and by which, man may develop a worthy civilization, capable of maintaining and constantly improving itself, until the evolution of our globe shall have entered so far upon its downward course that the cosmic process resumes its sway ; and, once more, the State of Nature prevails over the surface of our planet."<sup>1</sup>

Such was Huxley's witness ; and though the vast majority of Christian people could not have appreciated the arguments which led him to this conclusion, yet the conclusion itself corresponded to a system of intellectual traditions and beliefs which had acquired a great hold on religious circles as a whole.

<sup>1</sup> *Evolution and Ethics—Prolegomena.*

It was therefore no mean achievement when the Edwardine Age proceeded on the opposite assumption. So long as religion and science eyed one another, they said, from opposite camps, both suffered. It was time, therefore, to let that Victorian habit pass, and to see whether a working synthesis could not be found. What more was needed than for religion to assume, and for science to concede, the survival-value of the morally good? Science was to recognize the paramount interest of religion in ethical good and to do homage to it as the custodian of value; religion was to accept scientific methods and conclusions and to withdraw from notice those parts of its message which seemed to go beyond these; and both were to accept the authority of the State as the surest practical guide available to men in pursuing the path of Progress.

Thus Science was represented as beckoning to the disciples of Christ in the other boat to come over and help; and in large numbers they went. It seemed clear that an enlightened policy of Social Reform, fortified by all the technical appliances of science, supported by large numbers of pulpits, and embodying itself in legislative enactments, was really bringing nearer—indeed very near—the Kingdom of God. The old Gospel of redemption from sin was obsolete. Redemption, of course, there was; but it was the redemption of society from oppressive conditions by making better laws. Sin as a condition of the soul and of society, and as distinct from the imperfection inevitable in the upward process of evolution, had no meaning. The modern man, as Sir Oliver Lodge truly said, was not worrying about it. Life was too full of profit and enjoyment to pay heed to the atavisms which we were outgrowing. Let men only trust to the progress to which botany, biology, sociology bore witness, and all would be well. That was the Edwardine faith.

Whatever criticisms may be passed on the rationality of this synthesis—and we shall consider these in a moment—it is scarcely disputable that the faith in which it formed a cardinal element was shivered in pieces by the catastrophe which swooped down in 1914. The Messina earthquake

could demonstrate that man's control over nature was still very incomplete ; and the loss of the "Titanic" reminded him that even his best achievements might be the sport of fortune or even of something which the Greeks would have called Nemesis. But that civilization as a whole should so far play false to the new creed as to plunge into universal strife had been unthinkable. Catastrophe of that kind and on that scale was the one thing for which there was no room in the philosophy of Edwardine England. Yet it came ; and the fact laid the theory in ruins.

For, first, it revealed human nature as infinitely more complex and incalculable than anyone had supposed. Like Samson of old, blinded and captive, man's warlike instincts— $\tau\delta\ \theta\nu\mu\o\epsilon\iota\delta\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$  as Plato calls it—had been brought in to make sport for comfortable society after dinner ; when suddenly it laid hold on the pillars of civilization and brought the whole edifice crashing down on the multitudes beneath. Here were discovered elemental forces, passions, springs of action and movement for which the formulæ of the doctrine of Progress made no provision. Economic science had demonstrated the absurdity of war and the certainty that not the vanquished only, but the victors as well, would be the losers by it. Yet here were whole nations trampling on the creeds and codes which they professed. Alike the good and the bad in man—his courage and his sympathy no less than his cruelty and his deceitfulness—proved the sterility of the old optimism. For his virtues showed that he could be "touched . . . to fine issues" far transcending the commercial morality of natural progress. Rupert Brooke stirred resonant chords at once when he sang :

Now, God be thanked Who has matched us with this hour,  
And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping,  
With hand made sure, clear eye, and sharpened power,  
To turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping,  
Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary,  
Leave the sick hearts that honour could not move,  
And half-men, and their dirty songs and dreary,  
And all the little 'emptiness of love !

Indeed, it was these very virtues which helped to reveal that other side of human nature so long forgotten, showed the full measure of "the mystery of iniquity," and brought back into currency the category of Sin.

No philosophy suffered so severely from the shock of war as the Edwardine philosophy of Progress. The reaction from T. H. Huxley had been too rapid and too unthinking. Catholic Christianity (which, on the whole, had held aloof from it) could say—and justly—that it had never entertained many delusions as to the spiritual condition of modern Europe, nor regarded itself as other than a religious movement still very young, with all time before it for the accomplishment of the purpose of the Incarnation. With equal justice pure science could claim that it had never identified the concept of human progress with that of natural evolution ; or, at least, that, if they were part and parcel of a single process, yet the æonian slowness of advance revealed in the earlier stages made it improbable that a decade of Liberalism and social reform would make much appreciable difference to the speed with which the final consummation would be reached. But the faith of the Edwardine Age stood or fell with the belief that the achievement of man's destiny could be fundamentally and manifestly facilitated by the policy of the Liberal State. Let it once be shown that there were factors in the problem which could not be dealt with on such lines, and the whole fabric fell to the ground. The war showed that Freedom and Sin were two such factors ; and the doctrine was doomed.

Yet once more, the war caused the real nature of science to be more fully understood. It was seen to be ethically neutral, an instrument in the hands of Will ; a method not a guide. This was a conviction which only gradually impressed itself on thoughtful people. In the earlier months the triumphs of science in surgery and in preventive medicine were so palpable that they tended to be regarded as still further proof of its ethical character. But as time went on and witnessed the ever increasing elaboration of hideous engines of destruction, in which physics and chemistry played a decisive part, the question began to be raised

whether man had not in fact created in science a Frankenstein monster destined soon to destroy him. The fact was realized that the finest scientific brains in Europe were engaged not only on the task of alleviating pain and saving life, but also and equally on the work of devising fresh cruelties and means of inflicting disablement and death. That is a fact, moreover, which still, though on a much smaller scale, holds good : for all the great civilized nations are employing men of the best scientific training in the invention of new and more deadly weapons of war. Science, in short, is seen to be simply another name for knowledge ; and knowledge, though for the rarer minds it can be an end in itself, is for the vast mass of mankind something to be used, for worse as well as for better.

The effect of this twofold discovery, of the heights and depths of human nature—*abyssus humanæ conscientiæ*, as St. Augustine called it—on the one hand, and of the limitations of natural science on the other, has been to obliterate those landmarks which did give, so long as they stood, a sense of direction and purpose in life to many of the leaders of public opinion. People are, in consequence, bewildered, “as sheep which have no shepherd.” The confusion so manifest in ethics, in politics, and in industry is but the symptom of a deeper-lying *malaise*, which extends to the foundation beliefs concerning the soul, its place in nature and in society, and God. The seeming synthesis between science and religion—the first giving its intelligence and capacity for guidance, the second its enthusiasm, idealism, and *verve*—had proved a broken reed and pierced the hand that leant on it. And so faith and knowledge have started asunder, to the great loss of each, and of society, which needs both.

Yet, however premature and unsatisfactory the Edwardine doctrine of Progress was found to be, it had certain very plain advantages. Either science or religion alone, and without the other, seems insupportable as a principle of life. Religion alone—that would mean surrendering all those triumphs of industry and methodical research, of faith in order and love of truth, of daring

intuition, which bear such eloquent testimony to the dignity of the human mind.

La nature la grande ouvrière—  
L'homme ouvrier comme elle:

—that is a vocation which man will not lightly resign. History provides abundant illustration of how religion itself suffers when it despises, and tries to dispense itself from, the secular and the external, and regards with indifference the realms of nature and of law. Fanaticism and superstition are never far from the door ; and, while theology and canon law show how religion needs the discipline of reason and order even for the maintenance of its own purity, the record of the Papal States, or of Geneva under Calvin, or of Scotland under the Covenant, shows with equal clearness how disastrous to liberty and richness of life is the attempt to subordinate all human activity to the single guidance of the supernatural. But, by the same token, science alone is not tolerable as the sole guide to life—not science, at least, as hitherto conceived. For the power of understanding natural forces and controlling them to our own purposes does not take us far, if the worth and wisdom of those purposes is precisely the matter in doubt. We are essentially back with the idolater whom the prophet describes :

The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms : yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth : he drinketh no water and is faint. The carpenter stretcheth out his rule ; he marketh it out with a line ; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man ; that it may remain in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest : he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn : for he will take thereof, and warm himself ; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread . . . . He

burneth part thereof in the fire ; with part thereof he eateth flesh and he maketh roast, and is satisfied : yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire.

There is nature controlled by knowledge and bent to the purposes of invention and material advantage. And the upshot :

And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image : he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me ; for thou art my god.<sup>1</sup>

That must always happen when an individual or a society makes science the sole arbiter of life. Man unaided<sup>2</sup> cannot pass beyond the highest which he knows, namely, himself. He makes a god in his own image and worships it.

We are safe, then, in affirming that, while the war shattered the premature Edwardine synthesis between science and religion and the doctrine of Progress which assumed it, yet some synthesis between those two attitudes of mind and fields of experience there must be. Moreover, people are not likely to-day to regard the problem as purely academic. One of the lessons which the war impressed upon us is the vital bearing of belief upon action and life. That is why right belief is so vital for all, a matter of universal interest and obligation. The gospel of Progress and of the steady march to the Earthly Paradise is seen to have been not only delusive, but mischievous. For it blinded men to the deeper levels of reality, and obscured the volcanic forces actually operative beneath the surface of civilization. Occasionally voices came from these deeper levels which portended the truth. Peru and the Congo, Zabern and Agadir were warnings that progressive man had not every-

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah xliv.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Plato, *Phædo*, 85D. Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*. " If any man shall think by view and enquiry into these sensible and material things to attain that light, whereby he may reveal unto himself the nature or will of God, then indeed is he spoiled by vain philosophy : for the contemplation of God's works and creatures produceth (having regard to the works and creatures themselves) knowledge ; but, having regard to God, no perfect knowledge, but wonder, which is broken knowledge."

" Nothing can fill, much less extend, the soul of man but God, and the contemplation of God."

where outgrown “the ape and tiger.” And from the snows of the Antarctic came the farewell of a dying man, which seemed to betoken a faith and courage of no earthly mould. But they were voices in the night, and few stopped to wonder what they meant.

A striking illustration of the power of the Edwardine doctrine was displayed in the Education controversy which ranged from 1906 to 1910. In its educational aims and principles more than anywhere a society will show the philosophy which actuates it. And the evidences of the popular synthesis were plain at every point. The Church Schools stood as the sole safeguard of supernatural religion in our educational system, the uncompromising witness to the autonomy of religion and the spiritual significance of life. The attack was made along two lines. The believers in secular knowledge as the chief instrument of progress complained that these schools were technically inefficient, and that technical efficiency could only be secured under a uniform system. Liberal Protestantism, which represented the religious element in the alliance, insisted that there must be religious teaching, but claimed that the State should be the religious authority, and that those parts of the religious teaching which were especially symbolic of spiritual independence should be omitted from the syllabus. And as though to proclaim the essential subservience of religion to civic utility, the formula of “No Tests for Teachers” was inscribed on the banners of Progress. The attempt failed; but, had it succeeded, it would have saddled this country with a form of State absolutism not much less objectionable than that which prevailed in Germany. It is to be hoped that the comprehensive policy now being outlined by the Church Assembly, affecting the whole educational system up to and including the Training Colleges, will not only remove the religious and professional grievances which exist, but will enlist on behalf of Christian education the support of all those to whom religious reality is dear. For while unity of administration will do justice to the rights of citizens and teachers as such, variety of type will correspond to the actual fact of divergent loyalties and

traditions in which English Christianity finds expression. The problem is that of comprehending within a single national system two distinct, yet complementary, principles of education, which have been described as the principle of initiation and the principle of illumination. The latter is concerned primarily with the imparting of intellectual knowledge and the development of the brain ; the former with the total reaction of the personality to life and the development of the social sense. It need hardly be said that Catholic Christianity, alike by its own genius and because it is the heir of Platonism, attaches most importance to this last. The Collegiate System in our Universities and the growth of the Public Schools bear testimony to its manifold utility ; and the claim now advanced is that a principle of education, which only the vicissitudes of history have caused to be confined to one class in our social system, should now be extended to every grade in the structure of national education.

Equally damaging as an exposure of the false optimism of the Edwardine Age is the evidence of Art. If there is real beauty and not merely superficial brilliance in a society at any era, artists can be relied upon to find it and to express it. That was precisely what then they could not do. In part the inability to find in contemporary civilization the true subjects of art led to an attempt at compensation by extravagant innovation in method : and a succession of strange fancies, starting with Post-Impressionism, filled the walls of our exhibition galleries. More striking, however, is the extent to which the achievements of the age were simply ignored.<sup>1</sup> We have no artistic testimony to the Edwardine era comparable with that which Phidias gave to Periclean Athens, or Michelangelo to the Florence of Lorenzo de Medici, or even Sir Joshua Reynolds to the England of his day. That does not mean that its achievements were not remarkable after their kind ; but it does mean that they were without that intrinsic element of value which immortalizes itself in the work of the artist. “ Than

<sup>1</sup> The point has been put with perhaps too sweeping a vigour by Mr. John Drinkwater, in the *Bookman's Journal* for November, 1921.

that," as Mr. Drinkwater has said, " it could have no greater condemnation."

Can we then determine more precisely the cause of the Edwardine error? When a widespread fabric of belief breaks down and fails to verify itself in experience, while leaving its *disjuncta membra* still current in thought and still indispensable to any future reconstruction, reason demands that we should examine the grounds on which the fabric was built. The fault evidently does not lie in the materials, but in their arrangement or their foundation. In the case of the Edwardine orientation, the guiding line was a fusion of the doctrine of evolution, accepted on the authority of science, with the doctrine of the Divine beneficence accepted on that of religion. The attempt was made to piece together *sans phrase*, and on the surface level only, two modes of thought which have in fact different histories, ends, and subject-matter. There is, of course, no necessary conflict between evolution and Divine purpose. But you cannot for that reason simply make the first the basis and guarantee of the second. Even those biologists who, like Mr. Julian Huxley,<sup>1</sup> refuse to regard the evolutionary mechanism as "non-significant" for ethics and claim to find in it evidence of *direction*, yet insist that this is very far short of saying that the process is *purposeful*. Yet that was the "jump" in thought which the Edwardine believers in Progress made. The fact is that the primary evidences of Divine purpose and beneficence lie mainly outside those phenomena which the concept of evolution arose to explain. It is an affirmation of the religious consciousness working on the *data* of religious experience, not of the scientific consciousness: the analogous affirmation of the latter is the Uniformity of Nature. And what Protestantism did was to isolate this affirmation of religion from the rest of the system of experience and thought to which it belongs, and to make a present of it to a wholly distinct tradition of thought. It is as though biology were to lend to astronomy its criteria of life and vital movement

<sup>1</sup> See article "Evolution and Purpose" in *The Beacon* for Nov-Dec., 1921.

in order to account for the motions of the heavenly bodies. And the result was inevitable. Evolution was accredited with a sufficiency for all the ends of life which it does not possess ; while the concept of Divine purpose and of the Divine character suffered a distortion which we are only now beginning to appreciate. The majestic symbol of the Divine Fatherhood became debased to the notion that there was a Power in the world which would distribute to all wealth and comfort, if only legislation could be hurried ; and sentiment usurped the throne of faith.

It is important that, in criticizing the belief in Progress which prevailed before the war, we should not seem to overlook the real measure of truth contained in it. Allusion has already been made to the brilliant constructive achievements which marked the period, and this doctrine must take its share of the credit for them. It is possible, for example, as Mr. Julian Huxley has recently said, that :

Through evolution, moral values become entwined with verifiable fact. Not merely does mechanism not see evolution as a mere sequence of non-significant events, but the latest triumph of mechanistic thought—the Darwinian theory of evolution—has at last given man that assurance for which through all his recorded days he has been searching. It has given him the assurance that there exists outside of himself a “ power that makes for righteousness,” that he is striving in the same direction as the blind evolutionary forces which were moulding his planet æons before his appearance, that his task is not to oppose, but to crown the natural order, to transform it to a better, not by taking a new direction, but by accelerating and intensifying the old.<sup>1</sup>

All this may be true. And the effect would be immensely to dignify all man's endeavours on the natural plane, to encourage the civic virtues—industry, honesty and truthfulness, cleanliness, conjugal fidelity—to promote the quest for knowledge, and to justify a sober optimism in secular affairs. But it would emphatically not be a philosophy for the whole of life. For it ignores precisely those

<sup>1</sup> cf. also Mr. Huxley's *Essays of a Biologist*, pp. 60, 261

experiences of the supernatural—Freedom, Grace, the Presence of God, the Power of the Spirit—which are the stuff of religion.<sup>1</sup> And it is these experiences and the affirmation they occasion which religion asserts to be the truest mentors and sanest guides available to mankind on all the problems of greatest moment.

Our first concern, then, is to vindicate the reality and the autonomy of the supernatural. This is not to hold nature cheap, since the supernatural is entwined and interfused with it. Nor does it mean saying to science, Thus far and no farther. The supernatural, too, has its science no less than the natural. But just as biology has (after long struggles) made good its independence from the shackles in which physico-chemical materialism would have bound it, and has convinced the world that the phenomena of life, though rooted in the physico-chemical field, yet need also fresh categories to describe them, so too theology has to assert a similar claim to-day. Indeed the reason for preferring the term “supernatural” to the older term “spiritual” is precisely that this claim is contested. The point is well put by William James :

Religion, in her fullest exercise of function, is not a mere illumination of facts already elsewhere given, not a mere passion, like love which views things in a rosier light. It is indeed that, as we have seen abundantly. But it is something more, namely, a postulator of new *facts* as well. The world interpreted religiously is not the materialistic world over again, with an altered expression ; it must have, over and above the altered expression, *a natural constitution* different at some point from that which a materialistic would would have. It must be such that different events can be expected in it, different conduct must be required. . . . It is only transcendentalist metaphysicians who think that, without adding concrete details to Nature, or subtracting any, but by simply calling it the expression of absolute spirit, you make it more divine just as it stands.<sup>2</sup>

If it speaks of its subject matter as the spiritual, theology

<sup>1</sup> cf. A. C. Turner in *Concerning Prayer*, pp. 398, 399.

<sup>2</sup> *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 518.

exposes itself to the misconception that it is dealing with a mere adjectival quality (however important) of things as they are. By calling it the Supernatural, it focuses attention on the fact that it is a distinct field of experience—"new facts," in short—with which it has to do. It was this distinct field of experience which Liberal Protestantism played false by in the Edwardine Age. It is the delimitation of that field, and the understanding of it by methods acknowledged to be scientific, which will give back to theology its old position as the Queen of the Sciences.

For convenience we may distinguish three stages of intensity and richness in which the Supernatural reveals itself in experience. There is first the stage in which it reveals itself as a gracious and constraining Reality amid the variety of helps or obstacles which make up the facts of life. It is gracious because, to a higher degree than any of the bounties and beauties of external Nature, or even of the tender greetings of human love, it convinces us as being supremely the Given. We do not find it, but it finds us; we do not know it, but are known of it; we do not apprehend it, but are apprehended by it. And it is constraining, because we have to bow to it. Its still, small voice speaks with an authority more urgent than is ever heard in the "great and strong" wind or in the earthquake or in the fire. It claims and elicits our surrender. "Wheresoever," says a great Catholic writer,<sup>1</sup> "there are acts, experiences, necessities of sheer self-surrender, in the deepest search and work within the visible and temporal, the contingent and relative, to the Invisible, the Eternal, and the Unconditional; wheresoever such self-surrender is from those temporalities, apprehended as such, to these Eternities, accepted, adored, as such: there is the Supernatural."

This stage of revelation in experience of "the Transcendent become Immanent to our human world" has its own peculiar prophets and seers. They are the poets and the artists of mankind. The tragic sequence of Satiety (*κόπος*), Pride (*ὕβρις*), and Fate (*ἀτη*) which forms the central *motif* of Æschylean tragedy; the consciousness of

<sup>1</sup> Baron von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses*, etc., p. 198.

supernatural guidance which suddenly nerves the blind footsteps of Oedipus, as he makes his last exit in the play of Sophocles ; the rôle of Anchises in the 6th *Aeneid* and of Beatrice in the *Divine Comedy*—what are these but symbols of the Supernatural in experience ? Or how account else for the sweet grace of chivalry in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, for Shakespeare with his *Tempest* and *King Lear*, for the passionate sculpture of Michelangelo, for Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* ? And the tradition has never died. When Henry Vaughan saw

“ through all this human dress  
Bright shoots of everlastingness ”—

when Blake cried :

“ Kill not the Moth nor Butterfly,  
For the Last Judgment draweth nigh ”—

when Shelley, the rebel and the atheist, sang :

“ It seem'd as if the hour were one  
Sent from beyond the skies,  
Which scatter'd from above the sun  
A light from Paradise ”—

when Wordsworth, telling in *Tintern Abbey* how the loss of the days when nature to him “ was all in all ” has been compensated, bears witness to

“ A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts : a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean, and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :  
A motion and a spirit, that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
And rolls through all things ”—

when Matthew Arnold, so critical as he was of the Catholic creed, tells of those moments when man's Buried Life emerges into consciousness,

“ And then he thinks he knows  
The hills where his life rose  
And the sea where it goes ”

(an experience so abundantly illustrated in his own *Note-books* published since his death)—then, in all these cases and a thousand others like them, we say that we find unmistakable evidences and intimations of what we mean by the Supernatural. We may not forget, nor think lightly of, this great Church of the poets and artists. They and we are part of one congregation, one Church Invisible; and we ask them to pass on with us that they may see “greater works than these.”

This second stage of the self-revelation of the Supernatural is reached when we come to the experience of the transcendent Reality as Personal. Jacob wrestling till the break of day; Samuel hearing his own voice called; the Three Children confident that their God would be able to deliver them from the furnace, but that, if not, they would still refuse to worship the golden image—these are characteristic records of this stage. Who that had not already pre-judged the question could read a Psalm like the 139th and still maintain that what is here given is not the evidence of contact with a Personal God, but rather a form of auto-suggestion? And the like dilemma is presented by the experiences of Prophecy and of Conversion. Of Prophecy I need say little here; for its evidential significance is the subject of the third chapter of this book. Suffice it to say that the writings of the Prophets will always be one of the sheet-anchors of Theism. Here, with an unparalleled clearness and precision, that gracious and constraining Reality, revealed in all experience of the Supernatural, is known as Universal Lord and Judge, Perfect in Righteousness, Purity, Wisdom, and Power.

Conversion is an experience of the Supernatural which involves very varying degrees of illumination. It may carry with it no more definite disclosure of the Supernatural than is described in the three great central chapters of Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*. It may, as so often in the case of adolescents, be primarily concerned with a particular struggle in the moral life, the grace received being, so to speak, canalized in a particular direction. Or it may be of that overwhelmingly vivid and luminous type attested by

prophets and mystics, of which St. Paul's conversion is a salient example. "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest"—that is the quintessence of the conversion-experience. Modern psychology has laid us under a great debt by its analysis of the mental mechanism operative in such experiences as this. Only let us not think that to understand the mechanism is to exhaust the significance of the fact. And the significance of the fact lies not only in the presence of the Supernatural in experience, but in the unveiling of what and who it is. It is Jesus. And just as in the first stage of revelation we joined hands with the poets and artists of all ages, so here we join hands with all those to whom our Saviour's Name sums up the whole of God, and who believe that in Him dwells all the Supernatural bodily. The whole work of the Church's pastoral ministry is to bring men and women and little children to Him. All that we experience or learn from others of Givenness, of Prevenient Grace, of Abiding Value and End, we recognize as finding its crown and true accomplishment and self-revelation in Christ. For "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us: and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

But there is yet a third stage; and we reach it when the Supernatural to which we give our homage is recognized not as "Jesus only," but as "Christ and His Church." St. Paul's conversion itself affords luminous testimony to this deepest apprehension of Reality. Just as the process of grace in his experience took its temporal origin, so far as we can judge, from the vision of Christ seen in the heavenward gaze of the first martyr, St. Stephen, so it was not completed, as the record of his blindness shows, until he had made his submission to a Christian, and been received into the Church by Ananias. It was the development of the implicates of this experience which made St. Paul the founder of Catholic theology. "There is one body, and one Spirit." In other words the Supernatural reveals itself in corporate as well as individual experience; it weaves itself into social history; it expresses itself in the outward and visible order. Indeed, it is precisely in so far as it does

this that we can have a rational knowledge of it in theology, and so commend it, not to this man or to that, but "to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Its institutional embodiment in Church, in Rite, and in Creed is the spear-point of its impact upon mankind as a whole.

## CHAPTER II

### THE GROUNDS OF BELIEF

ROM. x. 17.—So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ.

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S. JOHN vii. 16, 17.—Jesus therefore answered them, and said, My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself.

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The articulation of faith, then—the ministry of the Word—is always a result. It discovers what has happened. It makes its appeal to what is there. It discloses and verifies an experience.—HENRY SCOTT HOLLAND.

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Faith is vision of the unperceived . . . and brings things unseen to as full a certainty as if they were seen . . . for whereas the objects of hope seem to be unsubstantial, faith gives them substance : or, rather, gives not, but is their substance.—CHRYSOSTOM.

IT seemed necessary so far to clear the ground, before coming to the positive treatment of the subject of this chapter, namely, the grounds of belief ; for only so could we rightly envisage the problem as it presents itself to our generation. The destruction of the premature synthesis underlying the Edwardine optimism leaves its two elements still in being and still demanding to be combined. A rough-and-ready combination of the *results* of the scientific and the religious processes was proved to have failed. But the contention is advanced that co-operation in *method* may well be more fruitful. It will mean that Science is prepared to recognize the good faith and the intelligence of those who claim autonomy and objective validity for religious experience, and to allow theology, *for a time and provisionally*, to function in a “ water-tight compartment ” ; while theology must be prepared to accept the empirical

method to the utmost limit it will go, and to see where it will lead. And no speedy results can be expected. It is only within the last twenty years or so that theology has begun to realize how strong its position is on the empirical ground and to try to demonstrate this; and long time may have to elapse before the ordered knowledge so acquired can be made easily available for integration with the rest of knowledge gained by Natural Science. But that such integration can and will eventually be made is a part of all rational faith; nor will men accept the validity of any process of thought, unless it promise to present in the end an account of human experience which is harmonious with other knowledge, inwardly self-consistent, and capable of ample verification.

It is generally recognized that, for the great majority of mankind, the strongest determinant of belief in matters of conduct is public opinion. The desire for its praise and the fear of its blame constitute fundamental sentiments in the constitution of the human mind<sup>1</sup>; and without its operation law and convention would be scarcely intelligible.<sup>2</sup> At the same time public opinion is a proximate rather than an ultimate authority. It is moulded, and liable to be modified, by those who are called its leaders—teachers, clergy, magistrates and public men, doctors, statesmen, judges, and finally the Crown. Where these various authorities agree, a *corpus* of working beliefs is formed which makes for a strong and united State. Even where they disagree there may still be unity and strength, provided that public education has advanced far enough to secure a general assent as to the circumstances requiring suspense of judgment. For no democracy is secure without a Socrates in its midst; and if our schools fail to teach individuals, as Socrates taught the Athenians, how little a man can know by himself and how much there is to be known, they are failing in one of their most valuable functions. In other words, a chief aim of education should be to accustom the mind to discriminate between the

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to Social Psychology*, ch. vii.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Lord Balfour's *Foundations of Belief*, Part III, ch. ii., pp. 196 f.

different fields of knowledge and the nature and kind of authority proper to each ; so that men will not go to the Church for the determination of questions of art or of anthropology, to the medical profession for the solution of spiritual problems, nor to moralists for legal advice.

Some thirty years have passed since the Earl of Balfour, in *Foundations of Belief*, wrote his celebrated criticism of Naturalism and of the supposed conflict between Reason and Authority as grounds of belief. Insisting that neither of these could do without the other and that both were "causes" rather than "grounds" of belief, he proceeded to distinguish a certain development of the doctrine of Authority which could be regarded as something more than a "cause." It would be beyond the scope of this chapter to enter upon that discussion. Suffice it to say that the great majority of educated people to-day not only do accept their scientific beliefs on authority, but are prepared, when pressed, to justify this course ;—to erect, that is to say, what began as a "cause" of belief into being a "ground." In other words it is reckoned that nature and the human mind are so constituted that close familiarity with a particular field of experience and the tradition of knowledge which has grown up round it does lead to true judgments and beliefs. There is involved here a faith in the rationality of things which is perhaps incapable of proof. But the alternative is a scepticism from which men revolt, and which, even if they accept it professedly, they do not live by in practice. Without a first principle of this kind there can hardly be knowledge.

Yet another principle, akin to this, must be premised. It is that the various processes and traditions of work and knowledge in the different fields of experience are not really divergent. In the case of the sciences longest established the point need not be laboured ; astronomy and physics, for example, or chemistry and physiology are so closely related, and each of them so sensitive to fresh discoveries in the other, that none could regard the delimitation of their several fields of experience as other than provisional and noëtic. But already the same is being found true also of

such different sciences as psychology and economics; so that the conviction is being intensified that there are no fields of experience to which the inductive and intuitive method is not applicable; even though the proportion in which induction and intuition are blended may vary in various cases. It is the more important to lay stress upon this principle, since in the following pages religious experience is to be to a great extent isolated and put, as it were, in a "water-tight compartment." Yet, more perhaps than any other science, theology must accept the criterion of being able to give illumination by its work and its conclusions in other fields of experience than its own. Only—let us say it again—it must not be by a sacrifice of its own essential *datum* and subject-matter in the Supernatural; that must be jealously and firmly guarded.

These two points being premised, we may proceed to more precise definition. The authority behind the scientific beliefs by which the great bulk of civilized men conduct their affairs may be defined as *the free consensus of those best able to judge* on any particular matter. The consensus must be a free consensus, because where exterior compulsion is exercised Reason cannot do its work either of induction or of intuition. If Galileo at Pisa had been compelled to juggle with his weights, or the crowd to say that the heavier reached the ground first, the result of the experiment would have been worthless. Again, it must be a consensus of those best able to judge. As Miss Margaret Benson<sup>1</sup> points out, "the savage races of the world probably agree quite as little with our science as with our religion." Yet we believe our science to be on the road to truth none the less. This is a point important to bear in mind in connexion with a recent criticism<sup>2</sup> of Baron von Hügel's philosophy of religion. The writer asks whether on the Baron's principles it is possible to distinguish in regard to truth-value between Christianity and Buddhism. We answer that our reasons for believing Christianity to be true as

<sup>1</sup> *The Venture of Rational Faith*, p. 8. I have found this book most helpful and suggestive.

<sup>2</sup> By Algar Thorold in the *Edinburgh Review* for April, 1922.

against Buddhism are closely similar to those which justify us in believing in the scientific rather than (say) the Burman astronomy. Buddhism, in the last resort, is as inconsistent with the scientific view of the world as it is with the Christian Faith ; for it resolves the subject-matter of science—Nature herself—into negation. And if pressed to give account of our confidence in the validity of our Western knowledge, we do not hesitate to embark upon a judgment of value. We say that this Western knowledge has vindicated itself in a practical control of the forces and energies of the natural world which is in itself a good, and which is not enjoyed by peoples who reject our scientific conclusions. And similarly of our religion we say that it gives us a power of adaptation to, and therefore of conquest over, all the circumstances of life, which is more successful in the promotion and enrichment of life than any other. The steady numerical decay of Buddhism, and its inveterate tendency to lose its identity when subject to syncretism with other cults, affords some support to the truth of our judgment.

If asked what is meant in our definition by " those best able to judge," we reply that they are those who are most familiar with the relevant experiences. When a scientific theory has been verified over and over again in experiment—and experiment is only experience under a microscope—we say that it is true. This does not mean that it is the whole truth, nor that it is truth unmixed with error ; but that it is the truth so far as yet ascertained. Research in parallel fields of experience may adduce factors not hitherto present in this investigation, and these may modify the theory or even show it to have been in some fundamental way mistaken. None the less it was true so far as it went ; without it the better theory would not have been discovered<sup>1</sup>;

<sup>1</sup> cf. Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, p. 148 : " Yet surely to alchemy this right is due, that it may be compared to the husbandman, whereof Æsop makes the fable : that, when he died, told his sons that he had left unto them gold buried under ground in his vineyard ; and they digged over all the ground, and gold they found none ; but, by reason of their stirring and digging the mould about the roots of their vines, they had a great vintage the year following ; so, assuredly the search and stir to make gold hath brought to light a great number of good and fruitful inventions and experiments, as well for the disclosing of nature, as for the use of man's life.

and in trusting the authority of science we give our general allegiance to the scientific tradition in each of the fields of experience with which it deals.

Now the main contention of this chapter and indeed of those which follow it is that religious experience—the experience of the Supernatural, or, as Mr. Clutton Brock has called it, “the sense of the Transcendent”—is a genuine and distinguishable field of experience; and that the main assumptions and conclusions presented by the tradition of work and thought attaching to it have the same *prima facie* claim to acceptance as those of any of the sciences. The grounds of belief in theology, that is to say, are not essentially different from those which prevail in any other branch of knowledge. But here at once a formidable difficulty asserts itself. In all other branches of science, the experiences on which their conclusions rest are capable of repetition in experiment by any who are prepared to try. They are open to all whose senses and reason function normally. This is apparently not the case with religion. For religious experience—or at least for the specifically Christian form of it—there is needed in the subject what the Church calls faith. And this faith is not a simple act of reason and will such as is involved in all experiments. It includes such an act; but it involves also an illumination of the reason and a quickening of the will by Divine grace. It is possible to believe all the doctrines of the Church as a student might believe the *formulae* of his scientific manual; but that would not be faith in the Christian sense. For religious faith a prevenient activity of the Supernatural is necessary, a spiritual awakening and enlightenment, which is apparently not given to all. We are confronted at the outset, therefore, by a fact that renders the study of religious experience a task of quite peculiar complexity, and accounts for, even if it does not justify, the doubts with which religion's own account of itself is apt to be received.

One common and facile answer to this objection—viz., that where religious experience is absent, it is because the ethical conditions of it are not observed—may be dismissed at once. It is true, no doubt, that wilful violation of these

conditions often induces a callousness of heart in which faith cannot function. But it is also true that spiritual experience of the most intense kind frequently breaks in upon, and sometimes co-exists with, immoral lives. Of the first the woman to whom much was forgiven (St. Luke vii. 36 ff.), and the woman taken in adultery (St. John viii. 1-11) are salient examples; of the second, instances suggest themselves from the novels of Dostoievsky. The problem is not so simple as this.

Nor, however, is it peculiar to religion: analogous differences in the capacity for experience present themselves elsewhere<sup>1</sup> as well, and indeed are a common feature of life. We may take an example from Music. The physicist may deal with the same phenomena of sound as the musician, but *qua* physicist, he deals with the mode of their production and the vibrations which are their physical cause. He experiences the "matter" of the music, that is to say, but not the form. Similarly the physiologist may deal with the same phenomena in their impact upon the afferent and efferent nerves of the artists or the listeners. He too experiences the "matter" of the music, though less intensely than the physicist, since his attention is directed not to the music itself but to a particular effect of it. But now take the listener. If he has no "ear" at all, he will experience nothing but noise or sound—that is to say, the "matter" of the music without either intellectual or æsthetic analysis. If he has an "ear," but an "ear" untrained, he will experience the "form" of the music as well as the "matter," whenever and in so far as the rhythm and the melody are simple enough to appeal to him. Again, contrast such a man's experience in listening to the Sanctus in the B minor Mass or to the New-World Symphony with that of the man who has been trained to good music, and the latter's yet again with that of the real musician. We pass here through numerous gradations of experience, corresponding to the natural aptitude for music and the training in it which each subject has received. The higher we

<sup>1</sup> For a similar point, cf., Lord Haldane, *The Philosophy of Humanism*, pp. 16f.: also an entertaining passage in W. H. Hudson, *A Hind in Richmond Park*, pp. 10, 11.

move in the scale, the more we find that the experience passes from being a simple subject-object relation, as it is in the lower stages, to being what may be more properly called trans-subjective. Closer and closer interaction is found between the subject and the "content" of the music ; until the climax seems to be reached when the subject thinks, feels, and wills not only what the composer was able to express in his work, but also that great range of Reality which was too great for his powers and yet was present to him as he wrote. It is this that Browning portrays in *Abt Vogler* :

But here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can,  
 Existent behind all laws, that made them, and lo, they are !  
 And I know not if save in this, such gift be allowed to man,  
 That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound, but a  
 star.

Consider it well : each tone of our scale in itself is nought ;  
 It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft, and all is said :  
 Give it to me to use ! I mix it with two in my thought :  
 And there ! Ye have heard and seen : consider and bow  
 the head ! . . . .

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist ;  
 Not its semblance, but itself ; no beauty, nor good, nor  
 power  
 Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist  
 When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.  
 The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,  
 The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,  
 Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard ;  
 Enough that he heard it once : we shall hear it by and by.

Similar varieties of æsthetic experience obtain in connexion with Poetry and Drama, with Painting, and with the Plastic Arts and Architecture. And the point here to be emphasized is that these varieties, and even the comparative rarity of the higher kinds, are not held to invalidate the genuineness of the experiences themselves nor the witness of those who claim that these experiences mediate Reality and Truth to the subject. We do not say that it is purely a matter of subjective impression, taste, or judgment : we recognize the right of those most familiar

with this field of experience, even though the *profanum vulgus* may entirely disagree, to make intuitive affirmations with regard to it, and we reckon what they say as having authority. The fact that the experience on which these affirmations rest is the gift only of a minority does not prevent our preferring their authority to that of the majority who lack the gift. And we plead here for a similar procedure in religion. In many respects the parallel cannot be pressed: religious experience, for example, is on the whole more social than æsthetic experience, and it is probably more widely diffused. On the other hand the experience of a church-goer who never gets beyond the conventions of worship nor becomes aware of the Spirit presents close analogies with the man to whom Music is only sound : the student of the letter of religion, whether primitive or contemporary, is in much the same position as the physicist or the physiologist before a symphony ; while the gradations of æsthetic experience already noted in those who can reach the "form" as well as the "matter," and the "content" as well as the "form" and the "matter," of Music, have their counterpart in those infinite differences of degree which are characteristic of the supernatural awakening of faith.

A striking example of the specific character and content of religious experience may be found in the case of John Bunyan.<sup>1</sup> Various causes conspire to make Bunyan's spiritual history one of peculiar interest, and also one which especially lends itself to psychological study in present times. Not only is his claim to rank among the geniuses of religion undisputed ; but *Pilgrim's Progress* testifies to natural literary endowments of an uncommon order, and his life, though he began in a village farrier's shop, was spent in the hurly-burly of public interests and affairs. He has been fortunate, moreover, to find in the Rev. John Brown and in Mark Rutherford biographers of exceptional

<sup>1</sup> The whole of the following had been written before I had read Professor Pratt's treatment of the same subject in *The Religious Consciousness*.

merit, and in Macaulay a critic of acknowledged gifts. Finally, he has left us in *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* a personal record which provides us with ample and detailed evidence (except in the matter of dates) of his profoundest inward experiences. The contrast between this testimony and Macaulay's account of the same facts reveals with impressive clearness the *differentia* of religious experience.

Macaulay's attitude to the supernatural elements in Bunyan's experience is so typical of Whig philosophy in every age that it may well be quoted at some length. The passage comes from the early pages of the *Essay on Bunyan* which was written originally in 1854, for the eighth and ninth editions of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

"It has long been an ordinary practice with pious writers to cite Bunyan as an instance of the supernatural power of divine grace to rescue the human soul from the lowest depths of wickedness. He is called in one book the most notorious of profligates ; in another, the brand plucked from the burning. He is designated in Mr. Ivimey's History of the Baptists, as the depraved Bunyan, the wicked tinker of Elstow. . . . But whoever takes the trouble to examine the evidence will find that the good men who wrote thus had been deceived by a phraseology which, as they had been hearing it and using it all their lives, they ought to have understood better. There cannot be a greater mistake than to infer, from the strong expressions in which a devout man bemoans his exceeding sinfulness, that he had led a worse life than his neighbours. . . . It is quite certain that Bunyan was, at eighteen, what, in any but the most austere puritanical circles, would have been considered as a young man of singular gravity and innocence. . . . He declares, it is true, that he had let loose the reins on the neck of his lusts, that he had delighted in all transgressions against the divine law, and that he had been the ringleader of the youth of Elstow in all manner of vice. But, when those who wished him ill accused him of licentious amours, he called on God and the angels to attest his purity. No woman, he said, in heaven, earth, or hell, could charge

him with having ever made any improper advances to her. Not only had he been strictly faithful to his wife, but he had even before his marriage, been perfectly spotless. It does not appear from his own confessions, or from the railings of his enemies, that he ever was drunk in his life. One bad habit he contracted, that of using profane language ; but he tells us that a single reproof cured him so effectually that he never offended again. The worst that can be laid to the charge of this poor youth, whom it has been the fashion to represent as the most desperate of reprobates, as a village Rochester, is that he had a great liking for some diversions, quite harmless in themselves, but condemned by the rigid precisians among whom he lived, and for whose opinion he had a great respect. The four chief sins of which he was guilty were dancing, ringing the bells of the parish church, playing at tip-cat, and reading the history of Sir Bevis of Southampton. A rector of the school of Laud would have held such a young man up to the whole parish as a model. But Bunyan's notions of good and evil had been learned in a very different school ; and he was made miserable by the conflict between his tastes and his scruples.”<sup>1</sup>

In this passage Macaulay has set himself to whitewash Bunyan and has no doubt succeeded to his own satisfaction ; but he has done it in a way which shows that he has entirely missed the significance of what he is describing. He cannot conceive of the problem of conduct as more than the problem of particular actions, nor of serious sin except in connexion with intemperance or sexual unchastity. We are given to suppose that the case is one of a youth of strong natural virtues and sensitive conscience, who allowed himself to be narrowed and embittered by the society of “rigid precisians” in which he lived. It would be difficult on this hypothesis to guess how from this unlikely soil should have sprung the work which has placed Bunyan among the Immortals.

Bunyan's own testimony to what occurred is very different ; and fortunately modern psychology enables us

<sup>1</sup> *Five Essays*, by Lord Macaulay, pp. 28-30. G. Bell & Sons, 1919.

to understand his spiritual autobiography more richly than heretofore. Indeed, the record of inward conflict in *Grace Abounding* provides illustration of all the main features now recognized as symptomatic of the different types of conversion. The theory here followed in dealing with it, and the terminology used, are taken from two articles by a contemporary psychologist, Dr. Robert H. Thouless.<sup>1</sup> Accepting Dr. Thouless's classification of conversion experiences into (1) adolescent conversions, (2) normal adult conversions, and (3) mystical conversions, we note that Bunyan experienced certainly the last two, and possibly all three. Doubt exists as regards the first, because it is not clear that the spiritual conflict of his early (10th and 11th) years did in fact ever come to a head; and the case is complicated throughout, because the conflict proper to mystical conversion, which occupies the whole second half of the record, also underlay and interpenetrated the simpler moral conflict of his normal adult conversion. This fact, while it adds difficulty to the analysis, makes the case one of exceptional significance.

Of the earliest stage the most striking symptom is the fearful dreams and nightmares which the child suffered in sleep, and in which the torments of hell figured largely. As he outgrew these, and entered more and more into the life of his fellow lads at Elstow, he contracted a strong resistance to religion—"I could neither endure it myself," he says, "nor that any other should"; though even then he was subject to extreme painful emotion, if he heard or saw wrong-doing in someone who made profession of piety. It does not seem, however, that this adolescent conflict was ever resolved.

At the age of 21 Bunyan married. His wife had been religiously brought up, introduced him to two books of devotion, and got him to go regularly to church. The dignity and order of liturgical worship made a strong appeal to him, and evidently satisfied some part of those instincts constituting the "complex" with which he was

<sup>1</sup> See *Theology*, I. 327 ff., II. 67 ff., substantially reprinted since in Dr. Thouless's *An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion*, pp. 187 ff.

unwittingly wrestling. One Sunday he was deeply moved by the parson's sermon on Sabbath-observance, which he felt to be directed at himself ; and this was followed by a vivid audition and vision, while he was playing tip-cat on the same afternoon. The effect was very striking. He concluded that there was no hope for him, and that he "had as good be dammed for many sins as be damned for few" ; and he "returned desperately" to his sport again. This he did for a month, when two further experiences supervened. A loose woman who heard him swearing rebuked him, and thereafter he gave up the profane language, which had been his chief outward fault : and a poor man whom he chanced to meet turned him to Bible-reading, with the result that he undertook seriously to reform himself.

"Thus I continued about a year ; all which time our neighbours did take me to be a very godly man, a new and religious man, and did marvel much to see such a great and famous alteration in my life and manners ; and indeed so it was, though I knew not Christ, nor grace, nor faith, nor hope ; for, as I have well seen since, had I then died, my state had been most fearful."

He adds that his neighbours' praises pleased him well.

"I was proud of my godliness, and indeed, I did all I did, either to be seen of, or to be well spoken of by, men : and thus I continued for about a twelve-month or more."

I take this change in the neighbours' attitude as marking the climax of the second stage of Bunyan's conflict—the stage roughly corresponding to normal adult conversion. It is of interest to our present purpose for several reasons. In the first place it appears to represent precisely that level of experience and life which alone Macaulay shows himself able to appreciate in his Essay. He had become a respectable person. Secondly, of the three elements—the intellectual, the moral, and the social—which tend to give predominant colour to conversion-experiences, the two last are strongly represented and appear to reach a provisional satisfaction ; the moral element in the decisive abandonment of profanity, the social in the fellowship of the respectable neighbours.

The intellectual alone is unsatisfied, showing itself as an occasional irritant, as in the question whether he was one of the true Israelites to whom the promises were made. It is this intellectual element which acts as a sign-post to our third point, viz., that this stage exhibits unmistakable intimations of those deeper levels of experience which Bunyan was to pass through in the course of the mystical conflict still before him. Had the story recorded in *Grace Abounding* stopped short with Bunyan's entry into pious society, we should still have a valuable document of religious experience ; but we should never have had *Pilgrim's Progress*. For that work presupposes an insight such as only comes through spiritual conflict and temptation. We may thank God that Bunyan was not as Macaulay portrayed him.

The abandonment of such innocent pursuits as bell-ringing and dancing seems to provide the natural introduction to the third and longest stage of Bunyan's conflict ; since, as Dr. Thouless points out, a marked feature of mystical conversion is "the indiscriminate repression of human activities which other people regard as good with those which are generally considered bad." Moral justification of this conduct is often difficult to discover ; but it seems probable that in Bunyan's case two elements combined to cause it. One was the reaction against the associations connected in his mind with these entertainments. The other was a more subtle influence. It is evident that one of the strongest constituents of Bunyan's religious complex was the emotion of fear ; and the slender allusions which he makes to his childhood are sufficient to make it probable that "the fear of God" had been impressed on him during his upbringing in that stark fashion so characteristic of 17th century Puritanism. Clearly, too, this element of fear had much to do with his decision to abandon bell-ringing ; his dread of the bell or the steeple falling, while he only watched the bells being rung, attests so much. It is not unlikely that such anxieties had presented themselves to Bunyan, only to be sternly repressed, when he first began to handle the ropes ; and it would then not be surprising

that, when his religious sentiments became active, the fear which played so large a part in them should awaken those other close-lying fears which he had striven to drive away.

Be that as it may, Bunyan now enters upon a period of acute mental and spiritual conflict. The struggle is essentially not one between good and evil, but between Nature and Supernature; between the natural man and the man new-born in Christ. What he seeks is not a unification of sentiments and impulses on the natural level—that he already had; but a unification wholly on the level of grace, a thorough interpenetration of His own personality by Jesus Christ. This consummation is symbolized for him in different religious terms: now it is Faith, now Calling, now Pardon, now Election. And particular interest attaches to the "resistances" which prevented this complex passing into conscious experience. Allusion has already been made to the fact that Bunyan's moral conversion found him with an acute intellectual problem still unsolved. Similarly, throughout the third period, intellectual questionings account for a large part of the conflict. Indeed, Bunyan provides a significant warning of the mischief which a distorted theology may do. Unable to assure himself that he had fulfilled the Scriptural conditions of salvation, he fell into agonies of doubt and despair; broke into violent blasphemies of thought; desired to commit, and for a long time believed that he had committed, the unforgivable sin. Yet beneath the strange jargon of Puritan argumentation, it is evident that there was a real clash of elemental spiritual forces—himself and God. The unspoken blasphemies are the index of a heart in which self-assertion and pride are still potently operative. And, as the kindred experience of Bishop Butler shows, they are a temptation to which the highest spiritual natures are peculiarly prone. They are of a piece with the fact, pointed out by Baron von Hügel, that for Christians "Pride and Self-sufficiency is the central, typical sin." Bunyan always appears as struggling against the least relic or vestige of Self-sufficiency, and striving to be God-determined wholly and only. It was

these vestiges of pride which seemed to be revealed in what he poignantly calls "those sentences that stood against me"; which made it so dangerous to abide in any of those "rests" which God had given him on his pilgrimage to the Infinite; and which were finally subdued and sublimated when he came to see that his only righteousness was Jesus Christ, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

"Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed; I was loosed from my afflictions and irons; my temptations also fled away: so that from that time those dreadful scriptures of God left off to trouble me: now went I also home rejoicing, for the grace and love of God. . . . Here, therefore, I lived for some time, very sweetly at peace with God through Christ; oh, methought, Christ! Christ! there was nothing but Christ that was before my eyes. I was not now (only) for looking upon this and the other benefits of Christ apart, as of His blood, burial, or resurrection, but considering him as a whole Christ; as He in Whom all these, and all other His virtues, relations, offices and operations met together, and that He sat on the right hand of God in heaven. . . .

"Further, the Lord did also lead me into the mystery of union with the Son of God, that I was joined to Him, 'that I was flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bone,' and now was that word of St. Paul sweet to me. By this also was my faith in Him, as my righteousness, the more confirmed in me; for if He and I were one, then His righteousness was mine, His merits mine, His victory also mine. Now could I see myself in heaven and earth at once; in heaven by my Christ, by my head, by my righteousness and life, though on earth by my body and person."

So was prepared the soul of the man who was to illuminate for all time the road of those who are pilgrims to the Celestial City.

We have studied this example of religious experience in such detail, not because it is typical of normal Christian experience, but because the contrast between Macaulay's and Bunyan's accounts of the same history sets in so clear a

light the "new facts," as William James calls them, which religion introduces. We shall have in the following chapter to consider the interpretation which sees in these "new facts" nothing but the phenomena of auto-suggestion or of herd-suggestion. Whatever the upshot of that discussion, it is evident that Macaulay and Bunyan are working along different levels of experience, in which the same external occurrences have a completely different significance. For the former they belong to a series in time and place, whose meaning is completely weighed in the balances of social utility: for the latter, time and place are like the screen on which pictures are thrown by a magic-lantern; the real work is going on behind in the dark, where the Great Operator with muffled lantern sets human experience against "the white radiance of Eternity."

Meanwhile there is another aspect of Bunyan's spiritual conflict which may fitly serve as introduction to the concluding section of this chapter. To those who regard religion as purely subjective this much truth may be at once conceded, that in all religious experience suggestion plays an important part. The well-known influence of preaching in effecting adolescent conversion is an example of this; and we have seen how Bunyan, though then past the age of adolescence, was impressed by one sermon of his parish priest. But preaching is only one of the instruments or channels through which suggestion is exercised. It seems not improbable that, if the evidence were carefully examined, all conversion experiences would be found to be mediated from and to some kind of religious group and community. Often the individual is so preoccupied with their transcendent effects that he abstracts from the spiritual experience of his neighbours, and believes himself to be the sole recipient of the grace which he experiences. There are strong traces of this in *Grace Abounding*, but other things can be read between the lines. Of the influence of his home and school-training we know little: but we have seen how he was affected by his wife and her two books, by the Church services and ritual, by the loose woman's rebuke, and by the poor man who turned him towards Bible-reading. One may wonder

whether the magnificent ceremonial of the entry to the Celestial City in *Pilgrim's Progress* may not be a transfiguration of experiences first met with in his parish church. But there are other contacts with the Christian community, apparently more decisive for his spiritual history ; and we may well attend to these.

(I) I take first the meeting in Bedford with " three or four poor women sitting at a door, in the sun, talking about the things of God. . . . And, methought, they spake as if joy did make them speak ; they spake with such pleasantness of scripture language, and with such appearance of grace in all they said, that they were to me as if they had found a new world ; as if they were people that dwelt alone, and were not to be reckoned among their neighbours." The immediate result of this meeting was greatly to deepen the inwardness of Bunyan's religion. He began to take notice of " secret thoughts " ; " to look into the Bible with new eyes " ; and to rid himself of bad company. Finally, his experience was reproduced and universalized " in a burst of vision." He saw " as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain," while he was " shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds," separated from them by a wall. At last he discovered in the wall a narrow gap, through which, after many failures, he " went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun." And his interpretation of the vision was that " the mountain signified the church of the living God ; the sun that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of his merciful face on them that were therein ; the wall I thought was the world, that did make separation between the Christians and the world ; and the gap which was in the wall I thought was Jesus Christ, who is the way to God the Father."

The psychologist will be interested in tracing here the materials of the vision in preceding experience, and in pointing out how the meeting with the women, the separation from worldly companions, and the reading of the Bible (particularly if it were of the last three chapters of *Revelation*) seem to provide these. For our present purpose

the point I wish to emphasize is the operation of the social element in the spiritual experience. It is the four joyful Christians who occasion the process which culminates in the vision ; and the end of the vision is the welcoming of the subject into fellowship with " the church of the living God."

(2) Unfortunately not all Bunyan's contact with the Christian community was as happy as this. The dominating influence during the years of Bunyan's spiritual conflict was the personality and preaching of Mr. Gifford. The career of this remarkable man makes astonishing reading to-day. A man of Kent, he fought as a major in the Royalist army which in 1648 won back the southern part of the county to the King. At Maidstone, where Fairfax inflicted signal defeat on this force, he was taken prisoner and condemned to death. On the eve of execution he escaped from gaol by the aid of his sister, and made his way in disguise, first to London, and then to Bedford, where he practised as a doctor and was notorious for his loose life. Before long, however, he was converted, attached himself to the Congregational body, and became the pastor of their little community. In 1653 the benefice of St. John the Baptist, Bedford, falling vacant, the mayor and corporation, in whose gift it lay, presented Gifford to the living ; and it was there in the same year that John Bunyan became a definite member of his congregation.

Particular interest attaches to the contact of these two men, which seems to have begun in 1651 or 1652 ; for Bunyan's record of his experience from this time onward becomes detailed, and we get a vivid glimpse of the type of Christianity which Gifford and his church presented. The immediate effect of its impact on Bunyan was to intensify his sense of sin, until he became convinced that he was damned. The narrative here shows unmistakable signs of the preacher's Calvinistic theology ; and it would appear as though Gifford suggested to Bunyan many of those forms in which his " resistances " to conversion clothed themselves. Moreover, the despair into which he fell is accompanied by a marked lack of charity and of sympathy with the troubles of ordinary men, of which he is evidently

in no way ashamed. For a year he absented himself from church, and passed through a period of great desolation. But he then returned to Mr. Gifford's ministrations, and found them as seasonable to his soul "as the former and the latter rains in their seasons." An experience of grace followed, which made him amenable to some regular instruction. The historical facts of Christ's Birth, Life, Death and Resurrection came to have a meaning for him, as did the doctrine of the Incarnation ; as a result of which he contracted a vehement distaste for the Quakers, whom he believed to deny these things, and for others of his contemporaries, whose sincerity he questioned. But, though Bunyan later looked back to this experience as marking a solid gain in his spiritual life, it was not permanent, and there followed many months of acute doubt, discouragement and despair.

(3) The first break in the cloud of despair occurred one day when Bunyan was "in a meeting of God's people." We do not know what kind of meeting it was ; and the experience was not final in bringing peace to the subject. But it redirected the stream of his emotions and thoughts, and gave him a ground of hope which never forsook him again for long.

A survey of the social element in Bunyan's religious conflict is found, therefore, to reveal a very mixed colour in the "suggestions" to which he was exposed. That of the four poor women, and that of "the meeting of God's people" (so far as it went), seem to have been wholly beneficial ; they made for inward unification and for charity towards others. We cannot pass so unqualified a verdict on the influence of Mr. Gifford. Mr. Gifford's teaching represents the religious experience of a community, and its expression and systematization in a particular theological tradition. The vital element in this experience is the Supernatural revealed in cleansed and purified lives. But this very apprehension of God in Christ as the holiness of the converted individual has so preoccupied the subjects of it as to blind them to other aspects of experience ; and the Divine justice is so presented as to terrify and repel all

whose experience is not of the same intensity and focused in the same factors. Hence Bunyan's years of despair, and of brooding over the unforgivable sin and other hard sentences of Scripture: hence too, through the drying up of the veins of active sympathy, his lack of charity. His was a soul that could never have found God to be Love without great storm and trial within, all the more since he seems to have had his emotions of fear developed in his upbringing. But undoubtedly his experience of God as Love would have come more normally and met with less "resistance," had Mr. Gifford's suggestions sprung from a broader-based and more human theology, and had the community he represented been less rigorist in its conception of faith. Here, if ever, in Bunyan was a man crying out for the ministry of reconciliation. Both parson and pastor failed him; and for want of one to do for him what Ananias did for St. Paul, he was condemned to long struggles "as in a miry bog" and to fruitless torments which need not have been his.

The history of John Bunyan, therefore, is an impressive witness not only to the reality and distinctness of religious experience, but also to the vital necessity that whatever is mediated in religious experience by human means should be rightly and truly mediated; that the community which preserves and transmits all that is communicable in religious experience should itself embrace every variety and aspect of that experience; and that this catholicity of experience should find expression in *formulae* of adequate range to so vast a field, and be mediated in ways which will not misrepresent its inexhaustible richness. In other words what is needed is an authority co-extensive with the whole field of the relevant—that is, of Christian—experience; one which sacrifices none of the facts to premature theories whether of a narrow theology or of a narrow scientific philosophy, and which insists on the ethical end of religion, namely Charity, as the best criterion of Truth.

The claim of Catholic Christianity is precisely that it is such an authoritative tradition. It presents us with an

organic process of life and thought, in which religious experience has been, and is, described, intellectually ordered, mediated and verified. In fulfilling those four functions it claims rank beside the other great scientific traditions, as a distinct and valid field of knowledge ; and it is in that order that we will consider the claim.

(1) Few would dispute the contention that the Bible is unique as a record and description of the experience of the Supernatural ; and it is as such that the Church has always read it. All its other elements—cosmology, ethics, even history itself—are secondary to that. This conviction of the primacy of the Supernatural in Holy Scripture explains many phenomena of Catholic tradition, such, for example, as the popularity and constant recurrence of allegorical or mystical interpretations, or again as the widespread reluctance to bring the Bible within too easy reach of the unbelieving. We may question the truth of the one tendency, or the wisdom of the other ; but at least both testify to the belief that the face-value of Scripture is infinitely less than the real value. This is not to make it in any sense an esoteric book ; for the Church proclaims that the Bible history is in the main true and genuine history, and its teachings applicable to the whole of life. But it also insists that the Scriptures are the product of Divine inspiration and faith, and that their meaning can only be discerned by a like gift.

Various causes conspire to give the Bible this unique position as a record of religious experience in the literature of the world. We may compare it, for example, with other Sacred Books. In contrast with the Vedas or the Upanishads or with the Pâli Tripitaka, the canon of the Buddhists, it impresses us at once as being governed and necessitated by the facts of experience in a sense not found in those Eastern books. No doubt a real experience of awe before the elemental forces of Nature lies behind the hymns of the Rig-Veda, which often recall verses of the Psalms ; yet in the Psalms the God of Nature is rarely, if ever, dissociated

from the God of historical redemption. In the Bible, again, the disciplinary and ceremonial ordinances are kept in strict subordination to the ethical aims of religion, and are confined to the Book of Leviticus and a few other chapters of the Law; whereas in the *Brâhmanas* or the *Vinaya* they are the gist of the whole. Finally, the Upanishads are speculation pure and simple, and are comparable to the writings of Plato rather than to the Bible. In all these writings we miss that which stands out so plainly in Scripture —namely, Man, whether individual or social, who is the subject of God's self-disclosure. Pascal's words in describing his mystical conversion: "Dieu d'Abraham, Dieu d'Isaac, Dieu d' Jacob; non des philosophes et des savants," might well be taken as summing up the chasm which separates the highest Hindu Scriptures from the Jewish and the Christian. The Bible is the record of the experiences of the Supernatural which befel particular men and particular communities at particular junctures in their history. It is that which makes it, as the Sacred Books of the East are not, an indispensable manual of religious experience.

An equally palpable, though somewhat different, contrast is presented by the Qurân. Discounting all that must be discounted for a translation; recognizing all that Carlyle so eloquently represents of its sincerity; and allowing that its impression grows with re-reading—yet still the Qurân for one decisive reason cannot match the Bible as a record of religious experience. That reason is that the whole book is the work of one man, and that man a prophet. In other words it is as though we should institute a comparison between the Book of Isaiah or of Jeremiah and the whole Scripture of which it forms a part. No one would wish to dispute that Mohammed was a prophet; few would dispute that there was a real revelation of the Supernatural in his experience. But all the range and richness and variety of experience found in the Bible, the frictions and conflicts of different types of experience—prophetic, priestly, individual, patriotic—and all the manifold reactions of these types on the social and cultural life of people and churches through many centuries;—these things are unknown to the

Qurân.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the fact that the Bible contains arresting examples of prophetic experience, like the fact that it contains examples of ceremonial ordinance, priestly discipline, ethical teaching, and even of metaphysical thought, strengthens its claim to be taken as the representative *par excellence* of the experience of the Supernatural.

Again, it might be urged that we have in such a work as William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* a description of the subject-matter more adapted to the modern mind than the Bible, because more marked by scientific criticism and tabulation. The answer lies in a development of what has already been said of the Bible's emphasis on Man as the subject of the spiritual life. For the characters of the Bible are never specimens in a psychological museum, however much we may abstract from their surroundings for our own purposes ; but always concrete, full-blooded, men of flesh and bone, members of their generation in Nation and Church.<sup>2</sup> The instances cited by William James cover many centuries of measured time, yet have no history. No thread of continuous life runs through them, binding together memories and hopes, the past the present and the future. And it is this history which is the first and most crucial test for religious experience. The demands life makes for action, decision, judgment ; its surging tides of backsliding and reform ; its ramifying web of social relationships—these make up the stuff of Man's experience ; and it is in that rich and vital setting that the Bible shows us his religion. If the experience of the Supernatural meant that Man must cease to live—cease, in fact, to be genuinely Man—then the science of that experience might well become a department of Pathology. The unique evidential value of the Bible is that we are dealing with a historic community and historical persons. This does not prove *sans phrase* that the experience in question is objectively determined ; but it does prove that

<sup>1</sup> Not but what development can be discerned in the Qurân due to the changed circumstances of the writer.—See Geden, *Studies in Comparative Religion*, pp. 231 ff.

<sup>2</sup> This is well brought out in Dr. Alexander Whyte's volumes of *Bible Characters*.

its subjects were not mere dreamers, bemused by hallucination. An experience which gives inner consistency to a historical process of many centuries, and is represented as fulfilling that function at every point of the process, impresses the mind with an authority and weight that do not belong to isolated and fragmentary experiences of a similar character, however vivid.

No idea is more common to-day than that the value of the Bible has been diminished by the Higher Criticism. There is truth in this; but only for those who have been accustomed to look to the Bible, not for what it uniquely is and provides—namely, a record of religious experience—but for what it does not provide, an infallible science or an infallible historical narrative. Criticism has laid bare the complex literary *provenance* of the biblical writings, and shown that much which appears as history is rather legend or *aetiology*. One reaction to this critical process, common in German and American Protestantism, has been to re-write the history in the light of the results and to present it as the inspired record of the evolution of political institutions. They have done for the Old Testament what Niebuhr did for Livy. Certainly, in that case, it is not to be wondered at if the value of the Bible is diminished. But for those to whom the Bible is primarily the story of spiritual experience, Criticism has no such issue. The historical order of events is for them the raw material through which the Supernatural is expressed. To alter that historical order—to assign *Deuteronomy*, for instance, to the age immediately preceding Josiah's reign rather than to Moses—detracts nothing from its religious significance; rather it enhances it, by illuminating many details hitherto obscure. The story of Adam and Eve loses nothing if it is regarded as parable, not history; else we must say that the Good Samaritan has no value for us. Even Wellhausen's extreme theory, that nothing in Scripture can be regarded as historical prior to the Exodus, does not prevent the characters of Abraham or Jacob being superb embodiments of the experience of the Supernatural.

This use of the Bible as a unique record of the Super-

natural in human experience not only renders it immune from damage through literary or historical criticism, but also justifies the Church in retaining even those parts of it which are ethically obsolete. The spoiling of the Egyptians,<sup>1</sup> the Mosaic *lex talionis*,<sup>2</sup> Deborah's praise of Jael,<sup>3</sup> the strange story of the destruction of "the man of God" who accepted hospitality from the "old prophet" of Bethel<sup>4</sup>—these are some of the passages of Scripture which baffle the application of any absolute ethic. But they are not therefore the less instinct with the Spirit of God. Only the minds of rigid precisians in morality need stumble at these narratives. The Israelites tricked their oppressors, but only because they had faith in their future. Jael broke the conventions even of those savage times; but that does not prevent the Song of Deborah being "the greatest war-song of any age or nation."<sup>5</sup> In the legend of "the man of God," the brave man is punished and the time-server goes scot free; but no incident could better indicate the awful truth that "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." And the command in the Law to exact "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" is one of those cases, where, as pointed out by Baron von Hügel, "the belief that God had spoken was attached to genuine, if slight, moves or to confirmations of moves in the right direction; and in all such cases the belief was, so far, certainly well founded."<sup>6</sup> The truth is that there is an unconscious hypocrisy in this doctrinaire attitude to the morality of Scripture, whether it takes the form of criticism or of justification. Both alike forget that there is little that is absolute or final in the standards of modern Western civilization; and that circumstances constantly occur

<sup>1</sup> Ex. xii. 36. A strange example of the part played by this narrative in religious controversy may be found in John Forbes, *Irenicum* I. i. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. xxi. 24, Lev. xxiv. 20. cf. Matt. v. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Judges v. 24 ff.

<sup>4</sup> I Kings xiii.

<sup>5</sup> R. H. Hutton quoted in Peake *in loc.* In Deborah's Song, which is the earlier, Jael's deed is less dastardly than in Judges iv. 14-23. But the commentator's laboured attempt to justify it morally seems both to fail and to be out of place.

<sup>6</sup> *Essays and Addresses*, p. 47; cf. p. 26.

where the will of God has to be fulfilled in what is practically better rather than in what is ideally good.

At the same time the Church's insistence upon the value of the whole Bible (including the Apocrypha) does not preclude us from several important discriminations between the Old Testament and the New. Many causes conspire to give a quite special authority to the latter. As an historical record, it is capable of verification by collateral evidence which is not available for many parts of the Jewish Scriptures. Its ethical teaching, again, in its broad principles, as exemplified for instance in the Beatitudes, the "theological virtues," or the "fruit of the Spirit," meets with widespread acceptance, not only in the West, but also and increasingly in India and other parts of the East. Again, the books of the New Testament have won their canonical position at the cost of a much more searching criticism than is the case with those of the Old : for while the Jewish canon was taken over *en bloc* by the Christian Church, and accepted as authoritative from the beginning, the New Testament writings were adopted only slowly and *seriatim* in the course of several generations as the inspired Scriptures of the new Faith. Finally, we have in the New Testament the record of Christ Himself, of His Apostles, and of those whom He and they taught. The history of religious movements shows that the experience of their initiators exercises a normative influence throughout their subsequent development, such that all reform of later abuses is always, in part at least, an attempt to

recapture  
the first fine careless rapture

of the opening days.<sup>1</sup> The specific character of the seed then sown—what Newman called the "idea" of the religion—stands out there with arresting clearness ; and its description constitutes therefore a criterion by which in later years men may distinguish the wheat from the tares. This is not to say that the concepts in which the experience

<sup>1</sup> cf. Will Spens, *Belief and Practice*, p. 76. Also more generally *ib.*, Lecture ix.

is described may not be modified or become, for practical purposes, obsolete. But the experience itself contains an apprehension of the Supernatural which it must be the object of later teaching and practice to reproduce.

This quality of Holy Scripture as the unique record of religious experience is the nucleus of what the Church means when it speaks of it as inspired. It comprises the writings of men who were not only supremely aware of the Supernatural, but who responded to it supremely. That is what Inspiration guarantees. It does not guarantee historical accuracy in all particulars, nor the advocacy of an absolute ethic. But it does guarantee that here, if anywhere, are the roots of the knowledge of God ; and that no theology can be recognized as Christian which does not find in the experience there described the bed-rock of its subject-matter.

(2) It is a commonplace that in the actual practice of science "induction and deduction are mingled in intricate ways"; and a fascinating comparison might be instituted between the play of these forms of mental activity on the facts of natural and of spiritual experience respectively. Of Kelvin, for example, his biographer says :

"Like Faraday, and the other great masters in science, he was accustomed to let his thoughts become so filled with the facts on which his attention was concentrated that the relations subsisting between the various phenomena dawned upon him, and he *saw* them as if by some process of instructive vision denied to others. It is the gift of the seer."<sup>1</sup>

This is a process to which theology, both within and without the pages of Scripture, can afford many parallels. We may cite the 73rd Psalm, one of the few passages in the Old Testament where belief in immortality is affirmed. The writer is perplexed by his experience. On the one hand, he sees the pride and prosperity of the wicked, while the innocent and simple folk suffer. On the other hand, he is conscious of his loyalty to Israel and to Israel's God, who had so often manifested His grace in them ; and he feels his

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Professor J. A. Thomson, *Introduction to Science*, p. 78.

doubts to be a kind of treachery. He takes this conflict of experience "into the sanctuary of God," and there beholds the issue. For he sees what is beneath the surface—the dissidence and self-destructiveness of evil and the inviolable strength of good through its communion with God ; and from this intuition he reaches forward to the affirmation—as yet, only a hypothesis, and destined to wait long before Jewish thought used it again—that this communion must involve a glorious welcome after death.<sup>1</sup>

Similar psychological processes might be traced out with great detail in regard to the very varied experiences of prophets such as Isaiah, Ezekiel, or Daniel. Isaiah, the statesman-prophet, spent his public life in the thick of political interests and forces ; and it was the combination of this experience and the calculations arising from it with that central "conversion-experience" recorded in Isaiah vi. which was the foundation of his rare political sagacity. In Daniel's case the cruel condition of his people was fused with national memory-experiences on the one hand and with an intense faith in Divine purpose on the other, and gave rise to apocalyptic visions which constitute even to-day a challenging philosophy of history. Ezekiel, the priest-prophet of the Exile, is noteworthy, not only for his insight into the principles of spiritual worship, but also as exemplifying the value even of error in theological hypothesis. For his contention that the individual's lot in this life is in perfect keeping with his deserts is manifestly not verified in experience as a whole ; and in fact it meets with vigorous criticism at the hands of the writers of Ecclesiastes and the Book of Job.<sup>2</sup> Yet nothing would have been more true at that moment than that the individual conduct of every Jew was of supreme, and indeed cosmic, importance ; and no doctrine could have expressed that truth at that time in a form so likely to evoke response.

Already, then, in the Old Testament we find examples

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxiii. 1-24. The Psalm is also instructive as illustrating how the experience of communion with God gave rise to an ever improving theory. The Psalmist's supersedes the older one, seen in I Samuel xxv. 29, viz., that God kept men's souls in a bag.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Charles, *Eschatology*, pp. 66 ff.

of what is the second stage in the development of any branch of human knowledge—the stage of generalization, formulation, theory, following upon the collection of *data*. So far as Jewish thought is concerned, in ancient times at least, this stage is represented particularly in the Wisdom literature and the works of Philo. "In the progressive study," says Lord Kelvin, "of natural phenomena, that is, the phenomena of the external world, the first work is to observe and classify facts; the process of inductive generalization follows, in which the laws of nature are the objects of research." Substitute "spiritual" for "natural," "invisible" for "external," and "spirit" for "nature," and the sentence might well be taken as a summary of pre-Christian Jewish theology. Roughly speaking, the historical books of the Old Testament represent the record of the facts; in the later historical books and in the earlier prophets the element of theory enters in and combines with the first process; while in the Sapiential books and Philo we have various kinds of formulation and doctrine elaborated to explain the *data*.

But it is in the New Testament, of course, that we find most fully and most explicitly those generalizations which are characteristic of Catholic dogma and doctrine. Whatever else we know of the historic Christ, it is not disputable that a new type of experience of the Supernatural took its origin from Him; and this experience required new formulations and hypotheses for its expression. In the earlier documents, such as St. Mark and the sources of the other Synoptic gospels or the Epistle of St. James or St. Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, these formulations are rare and relatively simple; but they pass, as we should expect if the experience underlying them is real, through many stages of modification and enrichment before the close of the first century is reached. "Thou art the Messiah," says St. Peter, summing up, on the basis of his knowledge of God's ways, the experience of several months' discipleship with Jesus. But for Greeks and Gentiles such an affirmation conveyed little; and the Christology of the New Testament is largely the record of how the word

"Christ" becomes subject instead of predicate, while the predicate is taken from terms of ever expanding universality, such as "Lord," "only-begotten Son," "the Logos of God." In the earlier theology Christ crucified is the Servant of God, whose death is vicarious "for many"—an idea which seems inwoven with the deepest levels of His own experience:<sup>1</sup> in the later He is "the Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world."<sup>2</sup> For the band of His immediate disciples, again, the community of the new Faith is a "synagogue,"<sup>3</sup> or a "way";<sup>4</sup> for St. Paul it becomes "the Body of Christ," His "spouse," "the Israel of God"; and in still more sweeping phrase, the "new creation"—an idea which functions largely in the Johannine writings also.<sup>5</sup> Even two of the dominant concepts used by Christ Himself are changed when taken over into Gentile Christianity. His own title "the Son of Man" was unintelligible to Greeks, and so hardly occurs outside the Synoptic record of His sayings; while "the Kingdom of Heaven," which was the main subject-matter of His public teaching, dies to live again in the theology of the Spirit and the Church.

Reasons have already been given for the unique importance attaching to the intellectual ordering of experience which the New Testament presents to us; but that is not to say that the process is there exhaustive or complete. Just as the experience continues and is reproduced—identical in its chief cause, which is the Spirit Himself, yet ever changing through the change of its relations and its contributory causes—so the process of thought which accompanies it and seeks to understand it better continues and changes too. We may think of St. Paul and St. John doing for theology (regarded simply as a system of knowledge) what Dalton did for chemistry or Newton for physics; but, though in the case of the former what they have to

<sup>1</sup> Mk. i. 11. cf. Is. xlvi. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xiii. 8

<sup>3</sup> If this is the meaning of *τὴν προσευχὴν* in Acts vi. 4. cf. Lake and Foakes Jackson, *Prolegomena to Acts*, I.

<sup>4</sup> Acts ix. 2.

<sup>5</sup> cf. St John xx. 22 and below pp. 224 ff.

say has a unique authority, it is by no means, any more than in the case of the latter, the last word that can be said. And in point of fact the three centuries which succeeded the Apostolic age were astonishingly fertile in new doctrines, hypotheses, generalizations advanced to explain the Church's experience of Christ. Only one other period in Christian thought—that of Aquinas and the Schoolmen—can be compared with it in boldness of theological synthesis and theory. It is from those periods of keen discussion that Catholic dogma emerges.

Much misunderstanding would be avoided with regard to the character and purpose of dogma, if its place in the process of Christian thought were remembered. So far from being a system of oracular pronouncements made without ground in reason and imposed by an external authority, it would be seen to have been subject in its formative days to a series of checks and limitations which are of the utmost importance. For convenience two elements in dogma may be distinguished. The first is that which arose in all probability out of the answers required of candidates for baptism, and grew into credal shape as a brief manual of instruction for catechumens ; it was positive and simple and largely historical in character.<sup>1</sup> The second is that which first appears clearly in the Nicene Creed and is exemplified perhaps best in the Chalcedonian Definition ; where the purpose is not pastoral only, but theological ; not to teach, but also to warn ; to exclude error as well as to impart truth. Both elements have been doctrine or "teaching" for generations before they become dogma. Dogma means a *decision* or *resolution* ; and its cause is that the Church has been forced by stress of controversy and the necessity of defining a rallying-ground for its members to decide between rival doctrines, and to formulate terms for the expression of its faith. These formulations have a long period, that is to say, of incubation in the mind of the community. Moreover, they are set forth with two important provisos. One is that the preambles which give the reasons for the decisions reached

<sup>1</sup> cf. C. H. Turner, *Use of Creeds*, ch. I and II

are not themselves, as the decisions are, authoritative ;—a clear indication that they are held to rest at bottom not on a process of deduction, but on intuition into experience. And the other is that they do not become *de fide* until they have been ratified by the Church's general consent making itself effective over large areas and through long periods of time. That is to say, dogma does not become finally binding, until it has proved itself able to mediate experience as well as to explain it. Obviously the value of this certificate depends on the freedom of the consensus by which it is given—a point which gives a special authority to such dogma as was accepted before the age of Justinian.<sup>1</sup>

It may be objected at this point that the analogy between dogma and the generalizations of science breaks down, because, in point of fact, not experience, but the letter of Scripture, was the real basis of the former. The first proviso above noted is some answer to this ; but the point may be amplified. It is true that the appeal to Scripture and its exegesis play a preponderant rôle in the writings of the great dogmatic theologians. But such an admission conceals almost as much of the truth as it discloses. Let anyone read a page (let us say) of Athanasius's *Orations against the Arians*, and decide for himself. The spirit, not the letter, of Scripture is what here confronts us. The writer has *felt* at first hand what Patriarch, Psalmist, and Prophet felt ; found in his own experience the problems and difficulties which theirs presented to them ; prayed, suffered, wept and loved God with Christ Himself<sup>2</sup> and His Apostles. And he has done this in fellowship with the Christian community. He draws his resources from no

<sup>1</sup> No definite *terminus ad quem* can be set to this period. Constantine used his power in support of the *διοικήσις* doctrine ; but there was ample inducement to the Church later in the century to revert to the Arian belief, had its consent been in the first instance forced. The reason for choosing the age of Justinian is that in the East the alliance of Church and State becomes relatively permanent from that time ; while in the West the jurisdiction of the Popes was well established, at any rate by the end of the century. Not that the support of the State for a particular decision of the Church is not some evidence in its favour ; for the State would be unlikely to commit itself to the side of a doctrine which did not represent the general mind of the Church—i.e., was not true to its experience.

<sup>2</sup> cf. the deeply moving passage in *Orat.* iii. 57.

alien book, but from one with which they have the same inner familiarity as himself. He knows that its words will evoke in their hearts, and in that "general heart" which is the substance of the Church, the same echoes as they evoke in him. He takes his stand with them and with the inspired writers of Scripture on the Rock of the Spirit; and on that firm basis of common experience he wields the sharp sword of his argument. Take away those underlying assumptions which he and they share with one another—assumptions which are only explicable as the issue of a shared experience—and the *Orations* could not have been written. That is why Athanasius can be at once *contra mundum* and yet the spokesman of *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*. If heads had been counted in that age, Arius might have carried the day. But the appeal was to a wider field of experience—to that "general heart" of the Church, which may be quiescent for a generation, yet reasserts itself in the end. Not Scripture only, but Scripture as operative in and worked on by the experience of the community, is what determines the issues of dogma.

The contention here made, then, is that Catholic dogma has the same significance for the experience of the Supernatural as the generalizations of any science have for their relevant *data*. It is, that is to say, a guide to that experience and to its enrichment. Further, the total of the accepted generalizations of any science have an acknowledged authority and weight, which must be respected by anyone who aims at proficiency in that field of knowledge. We can now see why it is that the mere "Bible-religion," which was almost all that Bunyan had to guide him, was so unsatisfactory. He was like a student who would try to understand the phenomena of evolution without reference to any of the established conclusions of biology. Or rather—since such theology as he did have was warped and narrow—we might compare him to a man who was endeavouring to understand these facts by the use of the pre-Darwinian categories. Inevitably, the result was confusion. As Professor Pratt says, "No new insight was gained, no new

resolve was made, no change of values was brought about, no new birth was effected, no moral selfhood was achieved."<sup>1</sup> That is perhaps too sweeping an assertion, in view of Bunyan's later years; but at least it is true that what gain there was through the conflict was won in spite of, not because of, his theology. There is no phase of the experience recorded in *Grace Abounding* which is not to be found in Walter Hilton's *Scale of Perfection* or the *Theologia Germanica*; only there, because the subjects have had the advantage of a balanced dogmatic training, each experience falls into its place as part of a reasonable order, and Scripture mediates, not despair, but faith and hope and love.

The achievement of that result is theology's equivalent to what science does in giving man increased control over the forces of nature—a control which is one of the most arresting features of modern civilization. The analogue of that control in religion is the unification of the spiritual life in obedience to the Will of God. It is not an accident that the development of theology goes *pari passu* with the development of institutional religion. For institutional religion—so far from being a declension from the first purity of spiritual religion—is, on the other hand, an expression of the fact that the human element in religious experience needs intelligent direction and control, if it is to be a suitable vehicle for the Spirit of God. We cannot fetter or harness the Spirit, as we can harness the forces of Nature, nor predict His free operations; but we can prepare such instruments to His hands as will enable His work to fructify more quickly, and make more rapid His exercise of control in the hearts of men.

(3) The criterion of a scientific formula has been defined by Professor Karl Pearson, as "equal validity for all normally constituted minds." He means presumably that a true theory will always, given the same conditions, mediate the same experience to normal persons. That will

<sup>1</sup> *The Religious Consciousness*, p. 144. The essential soundness of the Catholic insistence on proper theological teaching—on orthodoxy in fact—needs no better *apologia* than is contained in chapters vii and viii of this book.

be its verification and test—a verification which will be the more impressive, if it is found to co-ordinate other groups of facts than those which it is first designed to interpret. The application of this principle to theology presents certain serious difficulties, which must be faced at once. In the first place the analogy is impaired by the fact, already noticed, that "faith" is required for the experience of the Supernatural ; and, though this can be to a large extent induced or prepared for by suggestion or teaching, it appears in the last analysis to be due to an operation of the Spirit in each individual ; and that operation, as both experience and Scripture testify, is not found equally in all persons. In some perhaps it is not found at all. A similar difficulty, however, as we have seen, is not reckoned as fatal to the formulation of true theory in music or the arts ; and we need not, therefore, halt over it at this stage.

The second difficulty arises, for religious experience, in connexion with the instruments of mediation ; and it is for that reason that the stages of mediation and of verification may be properly distinguished in theology. In the case of science the personal element in the transmission of experience is reduced to the lowest possible dimensions. The normal instrument of mediation is the simplest statement of the formula, in which the individuality of the writer counts for little. But in the case of religion exactly the opposite is the case. Attempts have often been made to use the Bible as an instrument of mediation without human interpretation ; but Bunyan's *malaise* is an indication of the danger attaching to this method ; while on the other hand the personal element is rarely in such cases really excluded, because the reader's mind is usually influenced to a large extent by the known beliefs of the person who introduces the Bible to him. Further, the Bible is itself the most personal book in the world : St. Paul's daring formulations gain half their force from the vividness with which the Epistles reveal St. Paul the man. The fact, in short, has to be recognized that in the mediation of religious experience the personal factor plays, and must play, a very great part ; the possibility of verifying the theory in experience being

largely conditioned by the fact of its being already verified in the life of the person who presents it. The "witness" necessary in the case of religion must be a witness, not in word only—which suffices for science—but also in deed and in power. As F. W. Robertson says: "Reverence for persons precedes the belief in truths. We will grant that there have been a few remarkable exceptions in the human race, who, by God's Spirit within them, have reached truth without knowing Him Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; but this is not the rule. One in ten thousand may have so attained it, but for the remaining nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine the rule is rather that it is not by our own desires or aspirations, or our intellect, that we reach the truth, but it is by believing first in persons who have held the truth. And so, those truths which you hold deepest you have gained, not by the illumination of your own intellect, but you have reached them first by trusting in some great or good *one*, and then, through him, by obtaining credible evidence of these truths."<sup>1</sup>

The recognition of this fact and of its perils explains the place which the Church assigns in its system to the Episcopate. Christian experience is summarized in two principal ways—dogma and rite—both of them representing the mind of the Church as a whole, and both dependent to a marked degree on human mediation. It is vital, therefore, that those who minister them shall be themselves representative of the whole Body. This is the force of the primitive appeal to the Apostolic Succession.<sup>2</sup> It is an appeal which is essentially stronger than the later one, which centred in the sacramental transmission of the grace of Order by the physical Imposition of Hands. Indeed, the later and modern doctrine would not have served, as the primitive doctrine did, to rebut the Gnostic claim to an esoteric succession from the Apostles: for sacramental

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on the Epistles to the Corinthians.* Lecture xxviii. p. 247. Ed. 1860.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Irenæus. "We can enumerate those who were appointed bishops by the Apostles themselves in the several churches, and their successors even to our own day, who neither taught nor recognized any such madness as these men maintain."—Quoted by Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, i. 378. cf. also Dean Church on "The Place of the Episcopate in Christian History" in *Pascal and other Sermons*, pp. 103-108.

succession can itself become esoteric, as certain sects of our own time have demonstrated. But the primitive appeal was unchallengeable, for it was to facts of patent history which everybody knew. "The bishop of any Christian Church is the head and representative of his flock, and has been regularly and openly put into possession of the *cathedra* or teaching chair, in succession to a predecessor who had in turn been recognized in his time as the one proper possessor of his chair—and so on right back to the foundation of the particular local church."<sup>1</sup> Nothing is known at this stage of the later scholastic distinction between Order and Jurisdiction: the bishop's function is to govern—that is to say, it is pastoral as well as sacramental; and he derives this authority from the Apostles by a chain in which every link is incontestable. And the effect of this is to safeguard the Church against one great danger—the danger of partial or distorted presentations of the truth. The Ministry of the Word and the Sacraments, that is to say, is entrusted primarily to those who are properly accredited to represent the whole Body in these solemn functions; and neither intellectual ability nor moral character is held to be any substitute for those credentials.

Again, the truths of religion are addressed not only to the reason, but also to the instinctive and emotional elements in man; and the heart is reached more quickly by forms of devotion and the ceremonies appropriate to them than by direct address. Reverence is the first step in the knowledge of God, as the prayer for it is the first petition in the *Pater Noster*; and the Church has never felt that the conduct of worship could be left solely to the taste of individuals. Thus we find St. Paul giving careful directions as to details of worship no less than about faith or conduct; and in the generation which followed him the presidency at the Eucharist was one of the fundamental prerogatives of the bishop.<sup>2</sup> It is not long, moreover,

<sup>1</sup> C. H. Turner in *Early History*, etc., p. 105. I am much indebted to this whole essay.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Hamilton's theme in *The People of God*, Vol. II. is that the origin of the Episcopate is traceable to this presidency.

before the cult itself comes to have a more or less regular structure ; so that, despite the variety of liturgical forms prevailing in different parts of the Church, no Christian of (say) the third or fourth century, who attended anywhere the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, could have doubted what service he was engaged in. A valid rite, that is to say, goes hand in hand with a representative Ministry as an organ for mediating religious truth. And the effect of this twofold provision is so to discipline and control the personal factor as greatly to minimize the opportunities of error. We read of heresies rending the Church in twain, and of various sections of it continuing in grave error over many centuries. But a more impressive, if less obvious, fact is that the Catholic Faith survived the heresies ; and that where, as in the case of the Papacy, there has been a great distortion of Ministerial order, the common Creeds and valid rite have largely circumscribed the scope of error and ensured the continuity of the supernatural experience.

We thus see that the clergy and the clerical office fulfil a vital function in the tradition of truth. It falls to them so to present the truths of religion that those in their care shall desire to apply and verify them in their own experience, and so find grace. Their duty is described as the Ministry of the Word and the Sacraments ; but the phrase is justifiable only if it be given its broadest interpretation. People know little of the pastoral work of the clergy, if they suppose that it consists only in preaching and taking services. More than any other profession, the clergy are brought into touch with every side and circumstance of human character ; and they find that versatility of method is as important as identity of message and principle. Particular importance attaches in this connexion to an institution which it is fashionable in some quarters to decry. I refer to the parochial system. Its virtual supersession in populous areas by the congregational system may be necessitated in particular cases by lack of men ; but that constitutes no argument against its intrinsic value. That value lies in the emphasis given by the parochial system to the inalienable

spiritual rights of the individual. The evidential value of the success of the Church's teaching is impaired just in so far as the evidence is provided by the personal coterie of a particular clergyman. On the other hand it is increased in the measure in which the success can be shown in lives of great diversity as regards natural opportunity, temperament and inclination. Those difficulties, that is to say, which beset pastoral work in the village or the small town, are precisely what give to that work an importance in the history of Christian truth which is out of all proportion to the numbers concerned. This is a point which cannot be too strongly insisted on in a day of great cities and crowded populations. Despite appearances the village still exhibits the essential type of natural sociological structure ; and its spiritual counterpart is the parish and not the congregation.

In the truth-process, therefore, of the Christian tradition we meet with an element of corporate discipline and rule which has no analogue in scientific tradition, and indeed needs none. Natural experience is accessible to all whose natural faculties are normal, and the organ of its transmission therefore can be humanity itself. Supernatural experience, on the other hand, gives contact with a reality which is not simply trans-subjective, but also, if we may use the term, intra-subjective. The treasure is never separable (as it is in science) from human vessels ; and the history of religions amply demonstrates how easily these are corrupted by laxity, worldliness or superstition. The result is to complicate the normal criterion of theory, which consists in its power to mediate experience, by a factor which is peculiarly liable to error. Catholicism can at least claim that in its system a determined effort is made to control this factor and make it subserve the interests of the whole process ; and the objection arising on this score is correspondingly subject to discount.

(4) Finally, the Church presents in the lives of the Saints a weighty verification of its teaching and practice. The appeal to this ever-growing record of sanctity involves undoubtedly a judgment of a kind not asked in natural knowledge ; it involves a judgment of character. That

judgment is ultimately a judgment of the character of Christ, for it is as reflecting one or another aspect of Him that the Saints command our veneration. But from that ultimate judgment there does not seem any escape. If a man cannot think of Christ as unreservedly admirable and good, it is difficult to see how he can ever come to think of Christianity as true. The fact that no figure in history occupies men's minds throughout the length and breadth of the world as His does to-day is some evidence in support of the claim made in His behalf. But when the claim is conceded that Christ does represent the ideal of human life, then the reflection of His mind and character in the lives of the Saints affords a very powerful verification of the Faith they have lived by. For it is not simply a question of ethical similarity ; the spiritual experience which is its ground and motive is reproduced. In the Saint's life the normal mediation through the Church's ministry is not dispensed with ; but it tends to be more and more transcended. The point is well illustrated in the case of Madame de Chantal. For several years after her vocation she is dependent to a marked degree upon the personal help of St. Francis de Sales. But the time comes when he sees that she must begin to walk alone, and he ceases to be her director ; and her experience of the Supernatural owes less and less to human mediation. Finally, the last eight years of her life represent a period of almost unbroken loneliness in spiritual things, while yet her heart is full of the sorrows and troubles of others. She feels, she says, as though she had committed all the sins and suffered all the afflictions of those who come to her for guidance and comfort. Like Him Whom she served, she treads the wine-press alone ; and every day she could echo the words of the Crucified, " My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? " It is examples such as hers—and they are many in the Church's story—which are the crowning verification of Christian belief. Nor, indeed, is it only those whose names are in the calendar who give this testimony. Every life, however humble or obscure, in which grace is winning victories, is likewise a witness to the truth. The joyful confidence of the

Church is founded upon the abundant traces of the Supernatural discerned in the hearts of common folk. The Saints whom we commemorate by name are only the captains of a great multitude, whom no man can number, and who with one voice proclaim : Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts : Heaven and Earth are full of Thy glory : Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high.

To sum up. The Christian tradition, regarded as a tradition of truth, can claim to represent all the stages which are required for the establishment of secure conclusions in any other branch of science. It has in the Bible a record of religious experience which is unrivalled, whether it be compared with the sacred lore of other religions or with such artificial classifications of the *data* as are to be met with in the pages of William James and other modern psychologists ; for its testimony is inwoven with a definite historical process covering many centuries and engaging many different types of mind. The Bible contains also the beginnings of doctrine and dogma, presented in various forms—allegory, psalm, history, prophecy, philosophy—and developing through these to the bold theological affirmations characteristic of the New Testament. To this record and to these affirmations particular authority attaches as arising directly from the experience of the Supernatural ; and this is expressed by the doctrine of the Inspiration of Scripture. But Scripture does not exhaust the interpretation of spiritual experience, though it is normative for this purpose. That intellectual ordering is carried on by theology, and is embodied in *formulae* and theories, some of which have established themselves as authoritative, while others have not. The text of theological, as of scientific, doctrine is its power to verify itself in experience. In the case of religion, however, the process of verification is complicated by the subjective element in the experience in question, and the consequent dependence upon personal mediation. Catholic Christianity recognizes this fact, and provides some safeguard against its dangers in its rule of the Ministry and its liturgical forms. Finally, the examples of the Saints

are emphasized in Catholic tradition as affording especially significant verification of the truths by which they have lived.

Such a conception of doctrinal authority seems to give life and body to St. Paul's description of the Church as "the pillar and ground of the truth"; and to suggest the lines on which we may hope to synthesize the various elements in the process for which at one time or another claim has been made that they, and they only, contained the gist of the matter. The Bible, the Creeds, the mind of antiquity, the teaching office of the living Church, the individual conscience—each of these has been erected in turn as the sole principle and fountain-head of authority in religion. The truth seems to be that none of these elements can be dispensed with, if a sound view is to be gained; and that the insistence upon one of them to the exclusion of others has proved one of the most potent sources of error and misunderstanding in Christian history.

The question may be asked whether any existing branch of the Church—and if so, which—can claim to embody the whole authoritative process; and it is the more pertinent, seeing that Baron von Hügel, to whose writings I owe so much, has made this claim on behalf of the Roman Communion. Of the inadequacy of Protestantism, basing itself upon the Bible and the individual conscience, the case of Bunyan may be taken as symbolic. The Roman Church, on the other hand, appears to have so emancipated the voice of the living Church from the checks and limitations which were its safeguard in antiquity as to constitute a type of authority with which the mind of to-day finds it difficult to establish contact; oracular utterances cannot carry conviction, when the credentials of the oracle are themselves insecure. Anglicanism, with all its defects, does seem to represent an effort to find a broader basis for authority, or at least to point the way thereto. It appeals to the Bible, but asserts that the Holy Spirit has not ceased, since the Canon was closed, to illuminate the general heart and reason of the Church. It gives high place to dogma and rite, yet is tenderly sensitive to the peculiar witness of

the individual. It has maintained the Catholic rule of the Ministry, and insisted on the rich humanity of the pastoral office. Even its tendency to sacrifice the higher levels of spiritual life and devotion to the cultivation of the average is being rapidly overcome, as the Religious Life and the development of other particular vocations provides scope for specialization. Its chief defect has been the lack of a living, contemporary authority. But anyone who will read the records of the successive Lambeth Conferences since their first establishment in 1867 will see that there too the deficiency is being supplied; and the Conference of 1920 displayed a boldness and a power of synthesis which had not been suspected in many quarters. Is it too much to hope that, as it becomes more conscious of its peculiar opportunities in regard to doctrinal authority, the Anglican Communion will make a determined effort to deal with the factors in its system which are still incoherent and unsynthesized<sup>1</sup>; and that it may fall to a later Conference at Lambeth, not only to appeal for unity to all Christian people, but to show that unity already achieved and expressed in the fundamental principles of its own being?

<sup>1</sup> The work of the Archbishops' Doctrinal Commission, appointed in 1923 with the late Bishop of Oxford as Chairman, represents such an effort. Its task is inevitably long and complex; but I doubt whether any movement in the Church at the present time offers greater promise of solid and enduring results.

## CHAPTER III

### HISTORY AND REVELATION

If this or any other State should go about to make laws against events, against what *may* happen, then I think it is obvious to any man they will be making laws against Providence ; events and issues of things being from God alone, to whom all issues belong.—OLIVER CROMWELL.

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What wonderful things are events.—DISRAELI.

I PROPOSE in this chapter to discuss one of the forms in which the Supernatural is revealed in human experience, and which has therefore become for religion a vehicle for the content of Revelation. That it is only one of many such forms may be seen by a study of Baron von Hügel's Essay on "Religion and Reality" in the volume already alluded to, where he deals with the revelational aspect or properties of knowledge, of the Æsthetic Sense,<sup>1</sup> and of the Moral Consciousness. Yet another form of Revelation is presented by the phenomenon of Mysticism ; another, again, and a complex one, in Tragedy. The form here to be discussed, however—namely, historical experience—seems to have especial interest for the mind of our present generation : for not only is it the form pre-eminently characteristic of Holy Scripture, but more than any other it presents facts and considerations of the utmost importance for the solution of the problem as to the objective basis of religious belief.

At the same time the discussion will, I hope, illustrate one or two points in connexion with Revelation which we should do well to remember. The word itself, is suspect. It is supposed to denote a means of arriving at truth which

<sup>1</sup> It is often supposed that the Bible is wholly blind to æsthetic values. The high level of its poetry is one answer to this notion. See also, for the appreciation of manual arts, Exodus xxxv. 30-xxxvi. i—a passage happily included in the Revised Lectionary as a lesson for the Thursday in Whitsun-week.

the religious mind can employ, when dialectic has proved bankrupt. Let me say at once, then, that I use it in no such sense. Revelation, in the sense followed here, underlies not religion only, but all knowledge.<sup>1</sup> For in all knowledge, or rather in all experience on which knowledge is based, there is an element of the *given* which is the object of experience. To the scientist the external Order of Nature, to the ethical philosopher the Moral Order, to every human being the other human beings with whom they have intercourse are most fittingly described as "revealed" in the experience of those various subjects: for their prevenience and givenness is a more fundamental fact than the activity of the subject upon them. In religion, however, this element has a unique preponderance in the subject-object relation which constitutes experience. The scientist, studying a fly's wing through a microscope, can think himself prior to the object he is studying; the worshipper can never think himself prior to God. In both cases there is a revelation of what is other-than-subject: but in the second case this is much more obvious and overwhelming than in the first. When Newman speaks of himself as resting "in the thought of two and two only supreme and luminously self-evident beings, myself and my Creator," he marks the gulf—of degree, though not of kind—which distinguishes spiritual from natural revelation.

We must, then, I think, recognize *degrees* of revelation. It is a notion with which we are quite familiar in social life, where our neighbours reveal themselves to us in very varying measure. If we go into the room of someone whom we do not otherwise know, how much it reveals of him! Furniture, pictures, books, all have their story to tell of the station in life, tastes, traditions, of the occupant. At the same time the revelation is inadequate; the facts are patient, within limits, of various interpretations. In a certain large house, in Norfolk, the walls of staircase and landing are hung with numerous prints and portraits illustrating the career of the famous Duke of Wellington.

<sup>1</sup> See a penetrating discussion of the subject in the *Church Quarterly Review*, April, 1924 (Dr. Relton).

They reveal the owner as at least English, cultured, patriotic. But within those limits there is wide room for conjecture. Is he, for example, a descendant of "The Iron Duke"? Or is he a soldier, who has learnt his generalship in that school? What has focused his interests along these lines? Only someone who had a more interior knowledge could tell us the real secret, that the owner had formerly presided over the great school which bore Wellington's name. We pass, that is to say, from the degree of revelation involved in a person's effects to the degree involved in some measure of personal acquaintance. And this measure, again, is divisible into an infinite number of grades, from knowledge at second or third hand to intimate friendship. In the latter case, we have not only a revelation, but a self-revelation or self-disclosure, which is revelation at its highest.

This analogy may serve to show what is meant when we speak of Divine revelation. The external world, which is the object of the scientist's experience, is comparable to the Wellington pictures on the wall; science is the study of the revelation of the World's Architect, when nothing else is known of Him. It is well, if it should make plain that there is more to know, and questions which cannot be answered along this level of experience alone.<sup>1</sup> There are those, too—the plain John Citizens of life—who know of Him at second-hand, from the laws they live by and the loyalties they profess. Yet again, there are those who are His friends—poets, artists, men of faith and prayer.

The rest may reason, and welcome:  
'Tis we musicians know.

And finally there is that most intimate circle to whom He discloses His very Being and Purpose—the prophets and seers of all ages. "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets!"<sup>2</sup>

The form of Revelation to be considered here is History. Few words are so chameleon-like in changing their meaning

<sup>1</sup> cf. *Rom.* i. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Amos iii. 7.

as History. It is used to denote the actual march of events, or, in other words, historical experience: again, it means the written records of such events: yet again, for Croce, who lays it down that "every true history is contemporary history," it signifies properly an act of thought in relation to the past, present, and future.<sup>1</sup> The first of these usages is the one most in point here, though there are contacts with each of the other two. There is more than meets the eye in such a phrase as "the actual march of events"; for on analysis it purports a cohesion and direction in events. We do not apply the term History to any odd assortment of events that we may choose to collect. They must be constituted in some sense or other into a *continuum* or whole, before the title is applicable. Otherwise we get, not History, but what Hesiod aptly called *Works and Days* —a rough agglomeration of events and their classification into Ages of Gold, Bronze, Iron and the like. Moreover, the constitutive principle, which transmutes "Works and Days" into history, is most commonly religion. Herodotus's conception of History is based confessedly on the *vépeorís θεῶν*; for Thucydides the Peloponnesian War is a drama which has the Tragic Elements for background; Livy and Tacitus write for a society which, if it knew no more of religion, held Rome and the Emperors in religious veneration. But we do not seem to find History, as distinct from "Works and Days," without the influence of religion.

Christianity would not quarrel with Croce's description of History as an act of thought in relation to past, present, and future, provided that the act of thought were admitted—as Croce would not admit it—to be God's, as well as man's. On Croce's showing, it is difficult to see how the human mind, as it increases in knowledge, should come to be more and more governed by a sense of the fixity of the past course of events. The past can take on new meanings for us; and fresh series of events can be seen to constitute History, which were formerly thought of only as "Works and Days"; but we cannot alter the main lines of foregone events. These events seem definitely Given and Prevenient,

<sup>1</sup> *On History*, Ch. I.

and reveal themselves to, rather than are constituted by, the mind of each successive human age. It is the Christian contention that their constitutive principle is the overruling will of God.

This conception of History is one peculiarly adapted to appeal to men of our own race, and to be for them the vehicle of Divine Revelation ; for our historical sense is more highly developed than that of any other people. A possible exception might be claimed for France, whose modern nation-hood, dating from the Revolution, may be regarded as tracing a true descent from the France of the Maid of Orleans. But even with this concession French history has neither the clear outline nor the long traditions nor the unbroken continuity which is so impressive a feature of the story of Britain. And in point of fact national self-consciousness in France was never a constant factor before 1789. It was the awakening of the "general will" by Rousseau and Voltaire which made France *la grande nation* in Europe ; just as it was the repercussion of the ideas of the Revolution upon Italy, Germany, Spain, and even Russia<sup>1</sup> which awoke them in turn to a sense of what they were. Even then the lesson was not learnt fully ; Germany had to wait till 1866, Italy till 1870, before their national history could make plain reading to them. In England, on the other hand, French nationalism found a patriotic spirit as keen as its own and stiffened by centuries of historical memory. Many causes contributed to this, but three perhaps stand out most clearly—our geographical position, which had made the command of the sea part of our creed since Alfred's days ; our independent spirit in religion, which even before the Reformation found vigorous expression in the statutes of *Præmunire* and *Provisors*, and is abundantly exemplified in the history of the Anglo-Saxon Church ; and the institution of Parliament, which from the time of Simon de Montfort saved England from ever acknowledging herself as the fief of a royal house.

<sup>1</sup> cf. G. M. Trevelyan, *British History in the Nineteenth Century*, 1782-1901, pp. 74 ff. The national revival in Russia under Catharine the Great (1762-1796) was perhaps more influential than the French infection in accounting for Russia's resistance to Napoleon.

The result was that Napoleon found himself fighting, not Nelson and Wellington only, but a nation long inspired with a profound historical conviction—the conviction that the actual course of its past was a continuous and significant unity, and part of a larger Order still fulfilling itself in the present and the future. For English people, so minded, it is inevitable that History as a form of Revelation should make a very special appeal.

Christianity has this idea of History as the Way of God deeply rooted in its system ; for it is inseparable from Holy Scripture. And it is grasped with a thoroughness not found in any other literature. A modern student of Thucydides has said that it appears “to be characteristic of ancient historians in general, that in so far as they look for causes of human events, they look, apart from supernatural agencies, solely to *psychological* causes—the motives and character of individuals and of cities.”<sup>1</sup> Both these sets of causes are found in the Bible ; but they are found in a quite distinctive proportion and emphasis. For there are but few exceptions<sup>2</sup> to the rule that the supernatural agency in biblical history is always the Divine Being ; and it is in some relation to Him that the “motives and characters” of men play their subordinate rôle. For the Hebrews and their Christian successors History is the unfolding of a single Divine purpose ; and in all the events which befall their own people they trace, and trace without difficulty, the footsteps of God.<sup>3</sup>

This conception of History is in still more startling contrast to that which the rise of the doctrine of Evolution has made popular to-day—so popular, indeed, that it is the fashion in German and American critical circles to re-write the biblical narrative in accordance with it. I refer to the view which finds the cause of all history in the operation of natural forces—physical, physiological, climatic, economic—which are subject to inexorable laws. That these causes do operate and are potent factors in shaping the course of

<sup>1</sup> *Thucydides Mythistoricus*. By F. M. Cornford, 1907.

<sup>2</sup> e.g., evil spirits speaking through false prophets : or angels.

<sup>3</sup> cf. Hort, *The Way, The Truth, The Life*, pp. 24, 25.

events is not denied. It is also possible to trace them in biblical history, as the narratives of Joseph or of Solomon make plain ; nor need we dispute the existence among the ancient Hebrews of many of the instincts and interests which have given rise, among other peoples, to absolutism or to democracy. But, if that were all, the Bible would be a book of very limited appeal. The truth rather is precisely the reverse. From first to last the peculiar witness of the Bible is to the predominance of personality, both human and Divine, as the decisive factor in the actual march of events, and to the inadequacy of any purely natural forces to account for them. The determining principle is always a call, a choice, an education of a particular race by One whom it is bound to obey. On this issue Christianity will always range itself on the side of Carlyle and of all others who reckon understanding of human nature as the first gift of the historian.<sup>1</sup>

The case is well summed up by Professor Otto :

" There are, then, three factors in the process by which religion comes into being in history. First the interplay of predisposition and stimulus, which in the historical development of man's mind actualizes the potentiality in the former, and at the same time helps to determine its form. Second, the recognition, by virtue of this very disposition, of specific portions of history as the manifestations of 'the holy,' with consequent modification of the religious experience already attained both in its quality and degree. And third, on the basis of the other two, the achieved fellowship with 'the holy' in knowing, feeling, and willing. Plainly, then, Religion is only the offspring of history in so far as history on the one hand develops our disposition for knowing the holy, and on the other is itself repeatedly the manifestation of the holy."<sup>2</sup>

Biblical criticism has done much to open up for us the apprehension of History as the form of Revelation ; and we may endeavour to build up in successive propositions

<sup>1</sup> See an excellent discussion in G. M. Trevelyan's *Clio, A Muse*, pp. 3 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *The Idea of The Holy* (Eng. trans.), p. 181. cf. the quotation from Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, iv. p. 155.

the doctrine of Historical Revelation which results. For sake of precision I state these propositions first dogmatically, and then subjoin the considerations on which they are based.

(1) *In Holy Scripture the immediate form of Revelation is the contemporary course of events; which is interpreted by Prophets, expressed soon afterwards in the writing of Law and History, or in the re-writing of older Law and older History, and endorsed through the acceptance of these by the community.*<sup>1</sup>

The proof that it is in the experience of current events that the Supernatural is felt to be primarily revealed lies in the character of the successive historical narratives of the Old Testament. There is a general consensus among scholars that none of these dates before the rise of the Monarchy; and it is precisely that institution which appears to supply the *motif* of the two earliest documents underlying the Pentateuch.<sup>2</sup> Composed in the early days of the division of the Kingdoms, they seem to represent the standpoints of Judah and of Israel respectively; and their purpose is to voice the sense of national self-consciousness and vocation, of which David and his successors were the symbols. In the Elohistic narrative, moreover, there is a conscious avoidance or toning-down of anthropomorphic elements, and an insistence on ethical aspects of religion, which betokens the influence of Prophecy. On the other hand, the stage of monotheism has not yet been reached in religion; Yahweh is the God of Israel, but the other nations have their gods as well. In other words, so much of the Supernatural is revealed as is involved in the making of a nation. What lies outside that limited historical experience is left uncriticized and obscure: the Baals and Molochs of surrounding paganism are taken for granted, because Israel has as yet no reason to do anything else with them.

<sup>1</sup> In this chapter I have primarily in mind the Old Testament. For the applicability of the canon to the New Testament in certain fundamental matters see Chapter IV.

<sup>2</sup> Commonly called J. and E. The chronology I have followed is that of Kautzsch in his admirably lucid *Literature of the Old Testament*. It is in the main identical with that adopted in Peake's *Commentary on the Bible*. cf. also D. C. Simpson's *Pentateuchal Criticism*, especially ch. vii.

But the Chosen People were not for ever to be chiefly interested in the development of their own polity ; and the second main *stratum* of Hebrew historiography belongs to a period when the fate of Israel became closely engaged with the rise and fall of empires. Egypt, Syria, Assyria—these are the powers which now enter on the stage of history ; and it is Israel's situation with regard to them which underlies the efflorescence of prophecy between the days of Amos and Hosea and those of Jeremiah. The prophets of this period are in the thick of international politics ; and it is in and through the march of current events that they see the Hand of God, and declare His will. And they declare it by saying that it is a call to the deepening of the idea of God. He is the Lord of all nations, not of Israel alone ; and He is disposing the history of them all, so as to hammer out in Israel, on the anvil of adversity, the righteousness which is their peculiar vocation. Ethical monotheism, that is to say, arises first of all as an interpretation of current history.<sup>1</sup> Assyria is not simply a giant enemy people, but “the rod of Yahweh’s wrath” ; He is angry, because Israel has proved false to its calling ; and He can wield Assyria as His rod, because He is Lord of all. It was not a popular message ; but it prevailed. Bishop Gore has said that the Bible is the “great handbook of minorities.” It is ; but they are minorities which convert themselves into majorities. And the instrument of this change is historiography. Some time in the course of the seventh century, the ideals of the Prophets were enshrined in a Law Book, which was published in Josiah’s reign as Deuteronomy ; and a little later the same influence found expression in the first redaction of the Books of Kings. In the form of Law and History they become part of the standard literature of the people, and enjoy an unquestioned

<sup>1</sup> In a recent issue of *The Churchman* (Jan. 1925, p. 18) Bishop Knox gives an interesting illustration of the connexion between theology and the march of events :

“It is noteworthy that the two great impacts of Predestinarian doctrine coincide, the first with the barbarian invasion of Europe, and the second with the discovery of America. Men were forced to think of whole nationalities outside the range of the Cross, and to take some account of them in their theology.”

authority. Here too, then, the actual march of events provides the form of Revelation. The pressure of political forces from outside made the question vital, What is the purpose of Israel? And the answer is, To be a holy people to the Lord. It is significant that it was from Deuteronomy that Jesus drew His answer to the tempter, and there that He found the simplest summary of the First Table of the Decalogue.

A generation had not elapsed, however, from the death of Josiah when the national catastrophe occurred which, more than any other single event in its annals, left its mark upon Jewish history. The destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar not only scattered the Jewish people east and west, and so sowed the seeds of that commercial cosmopolitanism which has characterized them ever since ; but it gave a new and decisive direction to their thoughts about God, and their own destiny. Political ambition withered and died ; and in the crucible of despair patriotism was gradually transmuted into a deeper and surer loyalty. Jeremiah accepts contemporary events as God's judgment upon the old order, and strenuously advocates a defeatist policy, while pointing forward to a new covenant in the future based on the spiritual illumination of every Israelite (Jer. xxxi. 33, 34); and Ezekiel, writing in exile at Babylon, builds up in constructive vision the outline of the Divine society which is being fashioned. And the picture is above all things the picture, not of a nation, but of a Church ; of a worshipping community<sup>1</sup> centring in the priesthood, and preserving its holiness by a series of symbols and ceremonial ordinances. And these principles took root in the people's hearts, far more so for the time being than the universalist message of the anonymous prophet whom we call Deutero-Isaiah. For it was Ezekiel's teaching which we find voiced in "the Law of Holiness," later incorporated in the Pentateuch ; it is with a Church that Haggai and Zechariah have to do, when the time comes for rebuilding the Temple ; and it was in the priestly circles, founded and trained by Ezekiel, that the third great source of Pentateuchal narra-

<sup>1</sup> Kautzsch, op. cit.

tive, known as the Priests' Writing (P), came into being. Here again, then, the message of individuals takes its rise from and depends upon, the actual march of events, which it interprets as sacramental of truth and Divine purpose. Unfamiliar at first, it comes to be welcomed by the community as true to its experience, and is enshrined in its Law and Historiography ; and the making of a Church becomes, as the making of a nation had been before, the vehicle of Divine revelation.

It may be well to pause here and note the bearing of these facts on the genuineness of the prophetic experience. Dr. Gore,<sup>1</sup> taking up the work of other scholars such as Dr. Edghill and Dr. Hamilton, has developed with unrivalled power the evidential value of the prophets' own testimony as to the source of their messages, and has shown the inadequacy of the various attempts made by Naturalism to discredit them. I venture to think that the considerations adduced above as to the progress of Israel's religion afford a further valuable buttress to those claims, and go far to dispose of the contention that theology is "dream or phantasy-thinking."

We may take Dr. Jane Harrison's recent *Epilogomena to the Study of Greek Religion* as typical of this kind of argument. Religion she says creates myths to represent its desires. The gods are thus personifications of our vital impulse ; "Jehovah is seen to be a projection of Hebrew desire and takes his place side by side with Zeus, Poseidon, and Apollo." Theology, which is "the science of the images of human desire, impulse, aspiration," serves the biological function of enabling us to "shirk the conflict" of life, by throwing it upon God. What it teaches as truths are thus :

Men set between themselves and actual wrongs To catch the weight of pity, meet the stress Of conscience ; since 'tis easier to gaze long On mournful masks and sad effigies Than on real, live, weak creatures crushed by strong. <sup>2</sup>	images
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<sup>1</sup> In *Belief in God*.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Browning, *Casa Guidi Windows*.

For this old religion, rich in symbols and dogmas, Miss Harrison would substitute a new kind, founded on shame, in which the essence is asceticism, "the crucifixion of animal desires," as the better (spirit) becomes more and more ashamed of the good (matter). But it is not therefore negative. "The negations of the Decalogue died with the jealous God who dictated them—died, that is, as religious impulses." The new Immanence, on the other hand, is creative, seeking scientific truth and beauty, and practising *ascesis* with that end in view.

Several criticisms of detail might be brought against Miss Harrison's explanation of religion. The statement, for example, that religious thought is "not exhausting" is not supported by any of the facts of prophetic or mystical experience. Her conception of religion, again, as "the projection of desire" needs far more elucidation than she gives it. Desire includes in itself many different levels of desires; and the projection of the higher involves the subordination or mortification of the lower. Miss Harrison recognizes this when she speaks of religion as involving "the crucifixion of animal desires." But that analysis is not adequate. There are types of religion which involve no such mortification—such, for example, as the Canaanitish cults which formed the environment of Israel's faith. There are types, on the other hand, which involve a mortification cutting far deeper than the level of "animal desires." It cannot be too often asserted that Christianity finds the primary seat of sin, not in the body and the animal nature of man (as most non-Christian writers suppose), but in his human and spiritual nature; not Sensuality, but pride or Self-sufficiency is its most radical element.<sup>1</sup> A whole array of religions—Gnosticism, Spiritualisms, Theosophies, etc.—achieve the conquest of Sensuality, but make little attempt to grapple with the subtler evils of inward rebelliousness and self-content. The "false prophets" of the Old Testament, who can be distinguished not by psychological,<sup>2</sup> but only by more external, criteria, may

<sup>1</sup> cf. von Hügel's passage on this point, *Essays and Addresses*, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Hamilton, *The People of God*, I.

very well belong to this category. But canonical prophecy, like the utterances of Christ and the Apostles, is far more radical. In its ethic it passes human desire through a filter fine enough to bar the passage not of "animal desires" only, but also of many which are purely spiritual. It sinks its shaft far below the surface level of personality, to tap the deepest currents of instinctive and emotional life. The development of Hebrew religion through ever-expanding societary moulds—from the tribal to the national, from the national to the international, yet still mainly political, from this stage again to the Church—national, but not political, and already intimating the universal and Catholic—this development is largely the story of how successively deeper and more selfless levels of desire were reached. And it is in these deepest currents that the trans-subjective reality of the supernatural order is revealed.

There is, no doubt, a defence of religion, and indeed of Christianity, which might be made along these lines. When the necessary corrections of analysis have been made, it is arguable that desire does lie at the root of religion and yet that the subjective conclusion does not follow from this premise. It can be claimed, that is to say—and mystical experience bears out the claim—that the deepest levels of desire open contact with a prevenient activity which has all the marks of being abidingly real. Such an experience seems to be intimated in the words of Christ Himself, when He says : " What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye have received them, and ye shall have them."<sup>1</sup> In the spiritual order, that is to say, where faith is the mainspring of personality, prayer finds itself interlocked with God's prevenient grace : the heart already has what it asks for. St. Paul, too, might be appealed to, when he describes the Christian's longing for the completion of the redemptive process as part of a cosmical passion, with which " the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now "; closing with a challenge to reason : " We are saved by hope : but hope that is seen is not hope : for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for ? But if we

<sup>1</sup> Mk. xi. 24.

hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”<sup>1</sup> This seems to be the line of thought which underlies Tertullian’s famous *credo quia impossibile*, as though to assert that desire reveals, in full face of reason, a contact with Reality which is its own evidence. And in recent times the same message of the vital impulse as the sufficient, and indeed the only true, ground of religion has been uttered with exceptional power by the Spaniard, Unamuno. “To believe in God,” he says, “is, in the first instance . . . to wish that there may be a God, to be unable to live without Him.”<sup>2</sup>

Yet I cannot believe that such an apologetic will ever prove an adequate foundation for Christian truth, however valuable its contributory aid may be. On the whole the Bible is singularly sparing of appeal to mystical experience. Its appeal is rather in another direction—precisely to that experience of historical happenings which I have called the “form” of Revelation. And it seems to me that we have here an answer of very great force to the subjectivist explanation of religion. I venture to claim for the facts adduced earlier in this chapter that they show historical experience controlling prophecy in the same way as facts control science. Historical experience has this characteristic, that it is peculiarly *common* experience, available to all. As between the false prophets and the canonical prophets in the Old Testament there is no dispute as to the facts; David, Assyria, Babylon were too obvious for that, whether in contemporary events or in the marks they left on Jewish institutions. Disputes came as to the meaning of the facts, and their relative importance. The “false prophets” explained no events, had no interpretation of history,<sup>3</sup> and left no remains. As Lord Haldane says, “Science requires more than the work of one individual for its creation. It is the child of time sufficient to eliminate the intrusion of the subjectivity of observers, both in facts supposed to have been observed and in theories

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 20 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *The Tragic Sense of Life*, p. 168. cf. also p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> cf. Ernest Barker in *Theology*, v. 24. “Paganism, whatever historic mass it might have gathered, was not historic within.”

about them."<sup>1</sup> Based as it is on the historical experience of many generations, the theology of the prophets may claim to be precisely "the child of time sufficient to eliminate the intrusion of the subjectivity of observers," not only with regard to the facts, but with regard to their explanation also. For in this experience, prophecy discerns the Supernatural, the Hand of God. No doubt the prophet's intuition is deeper, more rapid, more summary and all-embracing than that of the scientist; but it is not generically different. And it supports the same tests. The messages of the prophets were constantly and normally both unpopular and novel, distasteful to the natural desires both of themselves and of the people. Yet they so win the general consent as to transform those two elements so jealously conserved by all religious communities—their historiography and their law. Such an endorsement is not explicable except on the ground that they appealed to, and verified themselves in, those deepest levels of corporate experience which constitute the kingdom of Truth in man. The circumstances of prophecy, that is to say, and its issues as disclosed by Biblical criticism alike afford the strongest testimony to its contact with objective reality.

We may take as a concrete example the case of the prophet Jonah. Few books of the Old Testament have gained more from modern scholarship than this prophecy<sup>2</sup>; and its vivid picture of mental conflict renders it especially convenient for use as a *document humain*. Though put into the mouth of an Imperialist prophet of the reign of Jeroboam II,<sup>3</sup> its date is in all probability somewhere in the middle of the fourth century, B.C., and it is the story of the conversion of a Jewish patriot from a narrow nationalism to a more liberal and Catholic faith. The clue to the prophecy is in the last chapter, where Jonah is angry at

<sup>1</sup> *The Philosophy of Humanism*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g. Cornill, *The Prophets of Israel*; Peake's *Commentary*, in loc. The best exegesis of the book known to me is the Rev. C. H. Matthews's.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Kings xiv. 25.

the pardon of repentant Nineveh and cries out to God that he had known it would be so.<sup>1</sup> On his own confession, therefore, what had caused him to flee when first bidden to go and preach to the great heathen city was the fear that his hearers would repent and so be spared the Divine wrath. The first two chapters—surely one of the most perfect pieces of literature to be found anywhere—represent in dramatic narrative the futility of trying to evade the call of God.<sup>2</sup> The conscience is haunted ; the soul finds itself in “the belly of hell” (ii. 2), overwhelmed and bewildered by forces and circumstances of which it has surrendered the control. Only by supernatural pardon and grace is it delivered from desolating remorse, and restored to faith and obedience. That much certainly there is of genuine experience behind the narrative. It is a lesson never old. It is possible to “make shipwreck of faith” as much by clinging to old prejudices in face of the light as by pursuing new heresies. And Jonah clung to the old prejudices of Jewish nationalism : he was resolved to be a Die-hard even against his conscience.

I am myself inclined to find in this strange narrative yet one other important piece of personal experience. Significant stress is laid on the devotion of the heathen mariners after their own fashion ; on their courtesy to Jonah; and on the manful efforts they make to reach land rather than adopt his own suggestion and throw him overboard. It may well be that behind this feature of the story there lies a real reminiscence of kindness and human feeling experienced at the hands of Gentiles. Such kindness, moreover, must have been not uncommonly met with in the commercial relations of the fourth century, B.C. In that case we should have a valuable link in the psychological development of the prophet’s mind. When he shrinks from the dawning truth that redemption is not for

<sup>1</sup>Jonah iv. 1, 2.

<sup>2</sup>It is generally maintained now that the passages (Matt. xii. 40, xvi. 4) where our Lord seems to speak of the deliverance from the whale’s belly as a type of the Resurrection are a later accretion on sayings which in their original form meant by “Jonah’s Sign” simply the preaching of repentance. cf. Lk. xi. 30.

the Jews only but for all mankind, and in the midst of the torturings of conscience set up by *il gran rifiuto*, he meets with an incident which still further seems to prove him wrong ; and it is this experience, making its impression on his sensitive mind, which is enlarged and deepened and universalized by the activity of the Divine Spirit until it comes to be the dominant force in his personality.

Once more the form of the prophecy makes it probable that the author is not only describing a revolution of doctrine in his own personal life, but is also giving us a philosophy of history. Jonah, that is to say, is chosen as pseudonym, not only because that prophet championed political expansion, but also because he represented a decisive moment in the history of prophecy generally. Before the Babylonian exile Hebrew religion could and did sustain the hope of a great political future for their people. The universalism of Amos and of Isaiah was not inconsistent with this, though it strove to correct and purify it by the proclamation of a sovereign moral law to which all nations alike must bow. Prophecy was still nationalist—still capable of finding utterance like Nahum's. But the Captivity brought a great change. The Jews seemed to be completely submerged in the tempest of calamity, their faith and hope shattered, and their hold on life's purposes relaxed. That is the impression we get from the poem which constitutes the second chapter of the book ; and it is significant to notice how closely it reproduces the spirit and language of the Lamentations of Jeremiah. Had the warnings of Jeremiah's predecessors been heeded, had Israel followed the more liberal vocation of which they gave intimations, the disaster need never have occurred. As it was, the Divine mercy mitigated its consequences. The heathen inhabitants of Egypt and Babylon proved to be men of humanity after all ; the empire of Nebuchadnezzar was like a whale which gave up the people of God, when they called upon Him. And after Cyrus had set them free to return, " the word of the Lord " came to Hebrew prophecy " a second time " (Jonah iii. 1), and the Jews were called yet again to their task of converting the world.

The first two chapters of Jonah, then, represent the earliest stage in the prophet's conversion, and one which recapitulated in itself a momentous period in the development of prophecy as a whole. It is the period when the mere idea of the salvation of the pagan world provokes sentiments of abhorrence in the mind. But the intuition of the larger truth and duty does not die. In the conscience of the individual prophet it sets up a spiritual conflict which refuses to be stilled, and in which the experience of life comes to reinforce the suppressed complex. And similarly in the conscience of the community the rejection of the bolder ranges of inspired utterance in the eighth century led to the acute conflict voiced in the defeatism of Jeremiah ; until historical experience, making common cause with political despair, indicated the truth which national pride would fain have stifled altogether.

But the conflict is not over yet. Jonah goes to preach to the Ninevites ; they repent in sackcloth and ashes ; and they are pardoned. "God repented of the evil, which he said he would do unto them ; and he did it not." Jonah is indignant. This is what he had feared all along : "I knew that thou art a gracious God, and full of compassion, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, and repitest thee of the evil" (iii. 2). And now He had proved it. The belief on which the prophet had staked his life—the belief that Israel enjoyed an exclusive monopoly of Divine favour—this now lay in ruins. His creed was gone, and there was nothing more now to live for. And yet—perhaps his anger is over-hasty. Perhaps he has jumped to conclusions. God may be only playing with Nineveh : His judgment may be only stayed for a while. So he withdraws a space from the city and sits down in a shady place to see what will happen. And there follows a sharp inward contention, as pity and compassion gradually win to mastery. Is he right, after all, to be angry ? See this gourd, trailing up the trellis-work of his booth : in the morning a scirocco comes, and in a few minutes it is withered. Poor, helpless, hapless gourd ! And yet he had done nothing for it. There was nothing between him and it beyond fellow-feeling, a sense of being

companions in adversity. Still—he pities it. And then he looks across to the great city, with its multitudes of living souls, pathetic in their ignorance, and, besides them, the dumb beasts. . . . It is enough. The well-springs of genuine compassion are loosed, and its waters mingle with that great stream of all-encompassing love which issues from the Heart of God. The truth that the All-Creator is also All-Redeemer has been learnt.

Julian of Eclanum defines the Antiochene principles of interpreting prophecy, connoted by the general term *θεωρία*, as “the intuitive perception of transcendent truths in forms or things for the most part small<sup>1</sup>”; and these principles when applied to the Book of Jonah show it to be one of the high-water marks of Hebrew prophecy. The experiences underlying it are “for the most part small,” such as the kindness met with at the hands of heathen or the withering of the gourd. The repentance of Nineveh, if it has any historical foundation at all, seems to represent no more than what we should now call a successful “mission”; while, in the world-march of events subsequent to the Return, even the half-century of Babylonian captivity might seem but a short space of time. Yet in these things, for us as for the prophet, lie transcendent truths. Jonah’s prophecy is a remarkable example of how historical experience provides the form of revelation; for it combines this so closely with the personal experience of the prophet. Jonah finds in history the macrocosm of which the incidents of his own life were the miniature, and both alike contain the same revelation of God. It is a revelation which makes sense of the experience, both corporate and individual. Again, it is a revelation which runs directly counter to the avowed desire of the subjects. The truth which they resist presents itself as something given and coming *ab extra*; subjective only in the sense that the subject entertains it sufficiently to oppose it strongly; objective in the sense that the external world of history is sacramental of it and able, by reason of it, to bend the subjects to its acceptance.

<sup>1</sup> *Theoria est autem, ut eruditis placuit, in brevibus plerumque aut formis aut causis earum rerum quæ potiores sunt considerata perceptio.*

Finally, the prophetic message is accepted and endorsed by the community, which incorporates the book in its canonical Scriptures. Not that it tells them what they wish to hear—the later history of Judaism is evidence to the contrary; but because it says what they know in their deepest levels of experience to be true. It is difficult to see what more effective criteria than these could be provided to test the claim of prophecy to be a real revelation of God.

(2) *Past and Present are not the whole of History; to complete this form of Revelation the Future must be added. This is represented in the Bible by the elements of Promise, culminating in the Messianic Hope.*

The Hebrew mind was deeply seized of the conviction that future events would reveal God even more fully than those of the past and present. In the narrative books of the Old Testament this conviction expressed itself in "promises" made to their patriarchs and rulers. The form of these promises may well be due to the various redactors of the tradition. But nothing could be psychologically more probable than that the forward-looking instincts so characteristic of prophecy should have been a cardinal element in the racial consciousness from the beginning. The men of destiny, moreover, in the world's history are precisely those who have a vivid conception of the abiding fruitfulness of their lives and actions. St. Paul fastens upon this as one of the root principles of true religion. Its correlatives are faith and hope, which are the fruit of grace, not of the Law, and belong therefore to the immediate experience of the Supernatural. He sees, therefore, in Abraham one who reached forward in inspired imagination to the establishment of an inheritance of world-wide and Catholic compass; and claims that the Christian Church is its fulfilment in history.

The revelation of the Supernatural given in historical experience underlies the development among the Hebrews not only of the knowledge of God, but also of that projection of the historical imagination which we call the Messianic hope. The whole tendency of Old Testament scholarship for the last century and a half has been more and more to

ground the element of prediction or promise on particular historical experiences, and to find occasion there for the intuitions which Christian theology holds to be ultimately verified in Christ. Prophecies, that is to say, of which the New Testament claims to witness the fulfilment, have in the first instance a reference to the persons and happenings of the period in which they were uttered, and are governed by contemporary facts.

And this view, which is general among biblical scholars, can claim coherence with many different sets of facts. (a) It does justice to the essentially dynamic character of experience, as seen in the individual, the family, the business concern, the Church, the State. Every experience gained opens fresh possibilities of larger, though similar, experience. It is the truth implied in the servant's words, "Behold, thy pound hath gained ten pounds," and in the Lord's promise of increase to good seed in good soil, "some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold, some a hundred-fold." So, in the case of the Hebrew prophets, the apprehension of the immediate counsel of God in particular events suggests those further, yet certain, counsels still waiting to be manifested in time. It is thus, for example, that we find the conception of the general judgment or "Day of the Lord" closely connected in the mind of the prophets with particular catastrophes or crises which were its "prototype and harbinger."<sup>1</sup> The Book of Joel affords an illuminating example. The occasion of the prophecy is the devastation of the Holy Land by a plague of locusts. The prophet rouses the people to penitence and prayer. What they have experienced is not all. Rather, it is only the spear-point of a more awful visitation, when the day of ultimate doom shall come. "Alas for the day!" he cries, "for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come." This "day," however, is never defined except in the most general terms, nor is its significance expounded; and we get the impression that the prophet is moving in worlds beyond his comprehension. He is sure that his experience of decisive disaster through the plague of locusts

<sup>1</sup> Kirkpatrick, *The Doctrine of the Prophets*, p. 54.

is an experience of something infinitely more, and more terrible, still; but he cannot discern clearly what that something is. And a similar "doublet" is presented by his promises of restoration. When the people have repented, Joel makes Yahweh say: "I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied. . . ." (ii. 25, 26). But the Divine mercies do not end there. They too have their rich spiritual counterpart in the immediate preludes of the day of the Lord, when all members of the Holy People, without distinction of age, sex, or status, shall share the prophetic gifts of the Spirit (ii, 28 ff.); and in its issue, when "Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation" (iii. 20).

Dr. A. B. Davidson finds in this prophetic conception, with its symbolic or sacramental connexions between the fact experienced and the fact predicted, an indication that we are not simply dealing with the free play of the prophet's imagination. The final appearance of Yahweh in "the day of the Lord," he says, "was closely connected with these manifestations in great providences, as the outermost ring in the pool is but the widening of the innermost."<sup>1</sup> The two events, at any rate, the present or near and the future or distant, are in character, the second being implied in the first. And it depends on the nature and richness of the historical experience, on the adequacy of the actual march of events to embody the totality of the Supernatural revealed in them, how far the stress lies on the present and how far on the future. In the case of Cyrus, for instance, or of Zerubbabel—two figures whose work for Israel represented in pre-eminent measure the fulfilment of long-cherished ideals—prophecy already invests the present with the utmost possible significance. Cyrus was the "anointed" of Yahweh<sup>2</sup>; Zerubbabel his servant, who was to be "as a signet,"<sup>3</sup> and the crown, which as yet he was unable to

<sup>1</sup> *The Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 380.

<sup>2</sup> Is. xlvi. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Haggai ii. 23.

wear, was to be laid up in the Temple against a later day.<sup>1</sup> Already the man who was to fulfil Jeremiah's prophecy was at hand ; only the occasion for his coronation was deferred. This example is all the more striking because Zerubbabel was in point of fact of royal blood ; yet, as the Book of Ezra makes clear, he never made or countenanced any attempt to establish a monarchy. The actual course of history, that is to say, is faithfully adhered to : only it is insisted that it is not final. On the other hand, Messianic conceptions tend as a rule to be most vivid and dominant, not when the present most fully matches and represents the creed of Israel, but when it seems rather to belie them. Then it is that the prophet " calls in the new world " of the future " to redress the balance of the old." It has been said that the world's greatest men were men of despair.<sup>2</sup> If it be meant that they are those who have had no delusions as to the actual forces ranged against them and the impossibility of subduing them to the will, the prophets answer to the test. Their greatness lies in the fact that they passed beyond the depths of despair to an ultimate optimism, and saw that the present was but a short section of the whole historical *continuum* in which God was revealed.

(b) Again, the character of the Messianic ideas themselves is such as to suggest not only that they spring from historical experience, but also that they are given from outside and from above. In the first place, these ideas are various<sup>3</sup> and very often inconsistent with one another ; the widest divergences exist as to the qualification for admission to Messiah's Kingdom, as to its duration, as to the person and office of its ruler. As Dr. Davidson says, " In the Old Testament, Messianic truth runs in many streams, far apart, all pursuing their own way, and regarding which one far up the stream would be unable to say that they would yet meet in the same sea."<sup>4</sup> This fact alone makes

<sup>1</sup> Zech. vi. 9-15. cf. Peake's *Commentary* in loc. Jeremiah's description of Nebuchadnezzar as God's " servant " (Jer. xlivi. 10) is typical of that prophet's absorption in the ethical issues of events.

<sup>2</sup> Unamuno, op. cit. p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> cf. *The Teaching of Christ* (Longman, 1915), p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> op., cit. p. 373.

it plain that we are not dealing with anything in the nature of a fixed theological tradition of Messianism. On the other hand, the facts are readily explained on the view that the differences of expectation are largely the fruit of differences of historical experience. Such a view will explain indeed not only the variety in Messianic representations, but also the specific forms in which they naturally group themselves. "What is interpreted as *Messianic* in the New Testament is rather everything in the Old Testament which is ideal of its own kind—an idealism only to be realized in the last times, whether, for example, it be the king or the people, or the priest, or the individual saint. . . . The prominent agent in the particular age will be idealized. . . . Also at almost any time the condition of the people may be idealized."<sup>1</sup> I hesitate to use the words "ideal," "idealized" in such a connexion. I should prefer to say that these objects of historical experience are universalized and projected into the future. But, whatever word we use, the inference remains that history provides the soil in which Messianic ideas germinate.

The prominent agents to whom the Hebrew people were accustomed in their national life were kings or governors, priests, leaders of armies, and prophets. We should expect to find all these providing grounds for the pictures of the future Messiah. And in point of fact we do find all but one; but that one is a significant exception. It is the prophet himself.<sup>2</sup> And the omission tells a tale. No one had a profounder sense of their peculiar vocation than the prophets:<sup>3</sup> none played a larger part on the stage of history. Yet the prophet's is the one leading individual figure in the whole people which is never universalized and projected into the future. That is not so with the prophetic gift; all the Lord's people were to be prophets.<sup>4</sup> But the individual prophet, in his singularity and detachment from the bulk

<sup>1</sup> Davidson, op. cit., pp. 366, 367.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xviii. 15-18 is no exception, for the reference there is not to the Messianic age. See also Edghill, *The Evidential Value of Prophecy*, pp. 282-4.

<sup>3</sup> cf. Amos iii. 7, cited above.

<sup>4</sup> cf. Is. liv. 13, Jer. xxxi. 34, Joel. ii. 28.

of his contemporaries, was given by prophecy no more place in the Messianic age than was assigned by Christ to John the Baptist in the Kingdom of Heaven. That is a fact which has many implications ; I wish to emphasize only one here. It is that such a deliberate and uniform effacement of themselves and their special office by the Hebrew prophets is inconsistent with the notion that their pictures of the Messianic age were the fruit of day-dreaming or simple imagination. To suppose otherwise is to contradict alike the known conclusions of modern psychology, and the unvarying testimony of the saints and mystics. Contrast how careful Plato is to design a place and a very high place in the *Republic* for the philosopher ; how central Dante is in the *Divina Commedia* ; how large the statesman bulks in the Utopias of political idealists. That is how all men tend to universalize their experience and to project it into the future. The absence of this tendency from the work of the canonical prophets is an indication that in their case reality has been revealed with extraordinary objectivity and precision, and that natural proclivities have been conquered and subdued by supernatural inspiration.

(c) Thirdly, the extent to which prophecy was actually fulfilled in the history of Israel affords a strong support to the belief that the prophets were endowed with an exceptional insight into the principles of God's government of the world. Reaction against the old literalism which insisted that every prediction must have its detailed fulfilment should not blind us to the astonishing measure in which the prophets were right in their warnings and their promises. If Hosea foretold that Israel would go into exile and die, and yet be restored again to life, and if this came to pass ; if Isaiah promised that the Syro-Ephraimite alliance would come to nothing, and that the Assyrian, though in the hey-day of conquest, would be struck down, and was justified in the events ; if Jeremiah out of his despair rightly foretold the restoration of his people to Zion ; and Ezekiel by the banks of Euphrates the return from exile and the re-building of the Temple—then these are correspondences between prediction and event far too striking to be dismissed as

coincidences. Short of postulating an uncanny *clairvoyance* which seems alien to the prophetic writings as a whole, we cannot do other than admit that these facts represent a real intuition into the meaning of the march of events, and a grasp of the spiritual principles behind it which is not normally found in men. And such insight, once attested and vindicated, is not lightly to be discarded, when it comes to deal with events of a more distant future. Proved faithful in the lesser things of their own national history, it is reasonable to believe that they are faithful and credible also in the greater things of the eternal kingdom and the heavenly King.

(d) For it is in this double conception of the Kingdom and the King that prophecy reaches its culminating point. The two ideas are never far removed. Even where a prophetic promise does not contain the figure of a Messiah, the notion of the Kingdom is less that of a realm than of a personal rule, whether of God immediately or of His Word or Wisdom or Angel or Holy Spirit<sup>1</sup>; and, conversely, when the figure of a Messiah is envisaged, his office is determined by the qualities which mark his government—its righteousness, its power of uniting the people, its establishment of peace, its permanence. And this ideal Age which the Hebrew prophets discern comes in fact to be more and more identified with the appearance of a Messiah. In the earliest utterances,<sup>2</sup> such as those of Nathan and Ahijah, the expectation is probably of a succession of kings of Davidic character rather than of a single "Son of David"; and this idea persists in the promises of later prophets.<sup>3</sup> Yet not all of these are consistent in their portrayal; Jeremiah and Ezekiel,<sup>4</sup> for instance, whose words seem to portend sometimes a Davidic succession, speak elsewhere of one vicegerent of God's rule; while in Isaiah, Micah, and Zechariah the conviction of a single personal Messiah stands out clear and strong. The later history of Jewish belief was to show this as the dominant vein in Messianic prophecy.

<sup>1</sup> cf. Edghill, *The Evidential Value of Prophecy*, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Sam. vii. 11-16. cf. Edghill, op. cit., pp. 189-171.

<sup>3</sup> e.g. Obadiah, 21; Jer. iii. 15; Ez. xlvi. 8, 9.

<sup>4</sup> e.g. Jer. xxiii. 5, Ez. xvii. 22-24.

The significance of this tendency to concentrate on the hope of a single Messiah is that it involves a conception of history and of revelation as summed up in a Man. More and more the prophets found the clue to their experience of life and its events in the interaction of man with God and of God with man—in man's faith or unfaith, righteousness or iniquity, perfidy or courage, and in God's love or wrath, patience or action, mercy or rejection. The shaping forces of history are the wills of men, above all of the leaders of men ; and such men, whether prophets or kings or even foreign potentates, are raised up and sent by God. It is through personality, therefore, above all, that history reveals God. Over and over again, as we have seen, the prophets based their teaching on this principle and were proved right in the event. Yet these fulfilments never exhausted the counsel of God, or witnessed the whole accomplishment of His providence. And so prophecy pushes its insight to a yet deeper analysis and a more universal scope. It proclaims that the solution of the riddle of life, of the conflict which historical experience presents between the actual and the ideal, lies in a Person yet to be born, in whom every human capacity shall be matured by Divine grace into perfection. He is to stand in a unique relation to God, to be invested with an unexampled plenitude of Divine authority, and to satisfy men's need of redemption from sin and sorrow. So, "a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."<sup>1</sup>

This insight into the principles underlying the providential unfolding of history, and its vindication in the Personality of Jesus Christ, is a more arresting fact than any of the detailed correspondences between prophetic utterance and evangelic record which can in fact be traced<sup>2</sup>; and amply compensates Christian thought for the loss of some of those older "arguments from prophecy" by which the truth of religion used to be "proved." The prophets are

<sup>1</sup> Is. xxxii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Edghill, op. cit., p. 244.

heralds of the Incarnation, not because they predicted detailed facts about Christ, but because their insight into history as mediating God's revelation of Himself led them to enunciate ideas of the end and meaning of the historical process which finds convincing embodiment in Jesus, and in Jesus conceived as the Incarnate Son. There is no need to press particular words and phrases of Messianic texts in a Christological sense, when in fact the general correspondence of idea and event is so impressive. Thus in these prophecies we reach a yet further stage in the process of establishing the credibility of the prophets as exponents of a real revelation made through history. Their first attestation comes from their contemporaries who revised Hebrew historiography and law to bring them into harmony with the deeper levels of experience which the prophets had laid bare and interpreted. The second comes when the march of events bears out those warnings and promises which the prophets were led to utter as a result of their insight into the spiritual principles governing the world. The third, and in one sense the final, vindication is given when the Messianic hopes of a King and a Kingdom, which represented for the Jews the ultimate values of history, were fulfilled and embodied in One who was at once Son of Man and Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth.

(3) *Not even the whole of time, past, present and future, affords an adequate "form" of revelation. Behind and beyond the temporal order, there is indicated another and abiding order which shall supersede it; and, in relation to this, suffering is discerned as having an intrinsic value of its own.*

(a) The culmination of Hebrew prophecy, alike in its revelation of the Divine character and in its promise of the future, is to be found in the work of the anonymous prophet whom we call for want of a name Deutero-Isaiah (Is. xl.-lxvi). Like Jeremiah and Ezekiel he belongs to an age when the political aggrandisement of Israel was no longer within the bounds of possibility; like theirs, his vision of Zion's restoration is that of a City Church rather than of a City State, based on a new covenant and offering an

example of true worship to the world<sup>1</sup>; like them he insists on the transcendence and sovereignty of God, on His holiness, on the justice and righteousness which mark His disposing of history, and on His age-long choice of Israel. Again, for him as for the prophets generally, the immediate manifestation of Yahweh which he foretells portends, and is universalized into, a vaster, world-embracing consummation, though he is without that element of crisis comprised in the notion of "the Day of the Lord." Israel's imminent deliverance from captivity at the hands of Cyrus is the first step in a process leading to cosmic issues. "In the approaching restoration of his nation the prophet sees a great evidential act enacted in the eyes of the world (xl. 5 ; lii. 10), and adapted in the end to create a revolution in the religious feelings of mankind (lxv. 6)." <sup>2</sup> This event is pregnant with an entirely new epoch, and inaugurates the advent of the perfect kingdom of God, when the isles shall listen and the peoples hearken from afar,<sup>3</sup> and all flesh shall come to worship before Him.<sup>4</sup> Nature and society indeed shall be wholly transformed into fitness for the fulfilment of His glorious designs. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth : and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create : for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy."<sup>5</sup>

Nowhere else is the conviction of Israel's splendid future marked by so wide and generous a universalism as that which distinguishes Deutero-Isaiah. Yet that is not his most singular contribution to the development of Messianic ideas ; and indeed it is noticeable that this liberal doctrine played little or no part in the reconstruction of Judaism after the exile. It was the exclusive, not the expansive, elements in prophecy which exercised a dominant influence upon that task. More original, and —may we

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this section I have grounded myself on Driver's *Isaiah, His Life and Times*, Part II. ch. iii and iv.

<sup>2</sup> Driver, op. cit. p. 174.

<sup>3</sup> xl ix. 1.

<sup>4</sup> lxvi. 23.

<sup>5</sup> lxv. 17, 18. It should be said that many scholars—e.g., Dr. Charles—assign Is. lxv, lxvi. and indeed other passages to a later hand than Deutero-Isaiah.

say?—of more obvious and immediate application was this prophet's delineation of the Servant. The passages containing this have been distinguished, owing to their lyrical metre, as "Songs"<sup>1</sup>; but it is doubtful whether they can be so sharply marked off from others<sup>2</sup> of similar character. In any case, the prophet has woven them close into the texture of his own thought. And that thought is concentrated essentially upon Israel. The portrait of the Servant is symbolic, not of an individual, but of the best and truest elements of the people themselves. Behind the backslidings, idolatries, and worldliness so easy in the environment of pagan Babylon, the prophet discerns a faithful nucleus, who have not forgotten their vocation or betrayed their cause. "The figure itself is constructed upon the basis of the historic Israel, and exhibits, in their ideal delicacy and completeness, the most characteristic attributes of the nation."<sup>3</sup> It was matter of experience that both the nation as a whole and individuals in it had suffered for the truth; the fate of Jeremiah, indeed, may well have provided some of the colours of the picture. We observe, that is to say, that historical experience underlies these prophecies no less than others more obviously related to the march of events.

But on this foundation the prophet goes on to build a new structure. All that has been left unachieved in Israel's history is to come to fruition—not, however, as the result of a break with the past, but by a deepening and universalizing of those very forces and facts in the national life already revealed in historical experience. The Servant's work of re-establishing his own people in their own land (xlix. 6, 8) and of teaching the Gentiles (xlvi. 1, 4; xlix. 6) is to be achieved through the combination of the prophetic gift with *suffering*. And this suffering is vicarious, redemptive, a guilt-offering.<sup>4</sup> We are so accustomed to read this

<sup>1</sup> i.e., Is. xlvi. 1-7, xlix. 1-5, l. 4-9, lii. 13-liii. Professor Kennett's fascinating study of these passages is deeply instructive, and the Maccabean date he assigns to them is attractive; but it does not seem to have met with general acceptance.

<sup>2</sup> e.g., lxi. 1-3.

<sup>3</sup> Driver, op. cit., p. 180.

<sup>4</sup> See Driver's important note, p. 154, on Is. liii. 10.

chapter of Isaiah in the light of Christ's Sacrifice that we tend to miss what it involves of profound and penetrating intuition into historical experience. The two factors comprised in it—the prophet's conviction of his call to deliver God's message on the one hand, and the distress and desolation of God's people on the other—are here discriminated and re-combined in a wholly novel way. Hitherto, prophecy has stood over against Israel's suffering and has pointed to it as Yahweh's recompense for sin. Now, however, it is the very innocence of the sufferer which gives the suffering its significance. Together with this, and consistently with it, the sufferer is not the whole people, but that part of it which has entered into the work and calling of prophecy and so shares the prophetic task and gifts. In this way, for the first time, the person of the prophet—or rather of the prophet-nation—becomes an essential element in the message of prophecy. But he dies to live. The rest of the nation benefit by his teaching just because they have first benefited by his sacrificial death. It was Yahweh's pleasure then to "bruise" him; but out of death will spring a new life; and, the satisfaction made, he will live again in great honour and see the progressive fulfilment of God's purpose of salvation.

We have already seen that the conception of "the Day of the Lord" as the climax of history plays no part in the doctrine of Deutero-Isaiah. He has, in fact, no need of it. The purpose of that conception in the Old Testament is to compensate for the discrepancy between historical experience and Divine promise, and to gather up in a great *finale* at the end of the age the accumulated arrears of the Divine justice. Deutero-Isaiah denies the discrepancy. The factor which is to restore the balance between actuality and promise is already present in history: it is the redemptive potency of suffering and death, when these are necessitated by the testimony of the truth. For suffering, when so conditioned, is the form laid upon love for its manifestation. We speak of vicarious suffering; but it is the love informing the suffering which is vicarious. And in the Servant Deutero-Isaiah sets before us a figure wherein Truth and Love are

met together, so interpreting the ideal meaning of Israel's history as victory in suffering and life through death.

Moreover what we are dealing with here is no merely temporal sequence of Death and Resurrection. The thought of restoration following disaster is a commonplace of prophetic hope ; and even in the 22nd Psalm, where the thought is otherwise closely parallel to that of Isaiah liii, the idea is of the future as redressing the present. But in the case of the Servant of Deutero-Isaiah the connexion between Death and Exaltation is not so much temporal as spiritual. " In the Psalm one follows the other, in the Prophet one follows from the other." <sup>1</sup> Here for the first time in Hebrew prophecy Death is taken into the picture of the Deliverer. His vocation of moving the people to penitence cannot be accomplished short of the ultimate sacrifice willingly offered. But it is more than a martyrdom. The " Second Zechariah," writing two centuries later, portrays in allegory a smitten Shepherd whose martyr's death turns his people to repentance.<sup>2</sup> But Isaiah goes further than that. Not only does he give to the Servant's death a propitiatory and atoning significance, but he makes it plain that for the Servant himself death is not the end. The language he uses is general : Resurrection is implied rather than predicted ; but the Exaltation which he envisages is intrinsic to the Figure whose destiny he describes. The prophet is reaching out into an order of life very dimly desctried and yet felt and affirmed as real. His meaning was only to become plain when One came who perfectly fulfilled in His own Person the Servant's rôle and in His Death and Risen Life vindicated the unerring insight of the prophet.

The great contribution of Deutero-Isaiah to the problem of Revelation and History consists in his re-valuation of the factors. He holds as firmly as any of the prophets to the conviction that God will reveal Himself in a Kingdom which perfectly represents His will. But He has come to think of history as inadequate to be the " form " of this revelation.

<sup>1</sup> Edghill, op. cit., p. 311.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Prof. G. A. Cooke's University Sermon on "The Unknown Martyr : a study of Zech. xi-xii," published in *The Anglican Theological Review*, October, 1923.

Like other prophets, he conceives of history as finding its consummation in a Man, or at least in what is supremely human and personal ; but it is in a Man suffering and dying and being exalted through death ; and it is in this order beyond Death, and to which the Death of the Innocent gives access, that finality lies. Intimations of this abiding and non-successive order in contrast with the insufficiency of the things of Time are to be found in other books of the Old Testament, such as Job and Ecclesiastes and some of the Psalms<sup>1</sup>; and they find philosophical expression later in the Wisdom literature, where Hebrew thought has been strongly influenced by Platonism and Greece. But their study belongs rather to the history of doctrine than to any doctrine of history. They centre in the individual and his problems, not in the march of events regarded in the large and as affecting those units—whether city, or nation, or church—which are the proper subject of history. They are not, therefore, pertinent to the purpose of this chapter.

(b) There is, however, one other interpretation of history characteristic of Jewish thought which we must not ignore. In Holy Scripture the Book of Daniel and the Johannine Apocalypse are its most complete examples ; but it gave rise to many other writings which never won their way into the Canon, yet were influential in Jewish and early Christian circles. The general name of Apocalyptic is given to these books. Apocalyptic is distinguished from prophecy in two ways especially : it rests upon visions, instead of auditions ; and it lays stress upon the catastrophic crises of history, neglecting the ethical processes which bring them about.

As a result, Apocalyptic shows us history in *strata* rather than in sequence. The effect is that produced by a survey of Troy, Knossos, or the Roman *forum* rather than by a perusal of a historical work. We are shown a series of decisive events—national deliverances, calamities, persecutions, the overthrow of cities and empires—packed and pressed down one upon another, with no space left for the

<sup>1</sup> e.g., Ps. 49 and 73.

causal nexus of interests and forces which produced them. Poggio Bracciolini's reflexions on the view from the Capitol,<sup>1</sup> afford apt illustration of the method. At the same time historical causation is not omitted, though it is found in no concatenation of human actions. Its place lies in the condition of society and subsidiary groups—in their faith, apostasy, paganism of belief and morals—and in the Mind of God, which cannot regard it with indifference. Thus the causation is revealed in the decisive events themselves. Men and institutions are portrayed as they are or have been at each successive crisis, and are judged by that rather than by their intentions.

Further, this kaleidoscope of history is set against a *mise-en-scène* of imposing spiritual pageantry. The cloud that veils the Divine Presence, the lurid exhalations of the abyss, the sweep of falling stars, the dazzling sea, the scarlet and purple of the Beast, the angels with trumpets and loud proclamations, the hymns of those who await final redemption, the symphony of the triumphant kingdom—all these indicate (so to speak) the reverse side of events whose duller part is what figures in the historian's pages. Human volition is found to be a weak thing beside the mighty and mysterious powers which encompass it; the war in Heaven is of infinitely greater moment than all the wars of earth; and, as its issues are different, so its victors are often the world's vanquished. And yet the result of this treatment is not, as might be feared, to dwarf mankind. Pigmy as he is, he derives stature from this environment; for he is seen as related to ends which transcend everyday experience. He may shut his eyes to his surroundings and be reckoned only among "those that inhabit the earth," of whom that is all that can be said in the books of Life. It would scarcely be too much to say that the mass of men are for apocalyptic so much grist to the mill of the heavenly conflict: save that at every moment they may obtain their discharge by the way of faith. At least no contrast could be greater than that between history as apocalyptic conceives it and the medley of economic forces, utilitarian interests, and

<sup>1</sup> cf. Gibbon, vii. 301, Bury.

political causes which for us have almost swallowed up the philosophy of history since the days of Hume and Bentham. Nineteenth-century Radicalism thought of man as primarily secular and subject only to motives of self-interest, enlightened and broad-visioned as it might in some cases be ; he was part of a vast process, whose laws, however, admitted of scientific analysis ; and the spread of the knowledge of these laws was the one thing needful for fulness of life. The apocalypticist, on the other hand, sees man as part not of a process, but of a group in a judgment scene ; and it is this grouping which determines life and death. A polity which, like that of the Middle Ages, takes man's religious status as *for all purposes* the most important fact about him has very obvious lineal affinities with this way of thinking.

This power of looking at history—whether past, present, or even future—in vertical section rather than horizontally is what distinguishes apocalyptic. It is thus a true child of Jewish historical writings ; for though these are full of the human factor and its place in the sequence of events, the relation of man or at least of Israel to transcendent ends is never out of sight. It is when this relation becomes so all-absorbing as to oust all others, including even the forlorn hope which prophetic statecraft seemed to offer, that apocalyptic is able to establish itself. There is a psychological reason for this. When the march of events precludes all political optimism, the mind, if resolute on maintaining its faith and freedom, is thrown back on the memory of past experience ; and, where the writer is a patriot and a publicist, it is the crises of his nation's life in the past which stand out clearly. If any Englishman in days of war should interrogate his experience for an answer to the faith that was in him, he would inevitably think of the Armada, of Namur, of Trafalgar and Waterloo, of the Marne. They are the things that we remember. And similarly the Apocalypticist found in the fall of the angels, in the Exodus, in the Davidic kingdom, in the Exile, in the downfall of one oppressive Empire after another, in the sacrilege of the Syrian king, the critical events which made the stuff of Jewish history

and therefore of Jewish patriotic memory. In so far as our Lord's mind was apocalyptic, He is marked off from His contemporaries signally through the different series of events which in His experience were critical.

It is the fashion to decry Apocalyptic as unethical, fantastic, futile ; but before we condemn a type of religious literature which has left so clear a mark upon the form of our Lord's teaching, and which has been for centuries deeply valued in the Christian Church, we should do well to consider the problem with which it was wrestling. The problem was to give body to that transcendent and supra-historical order which the religious man's experience of the insufficiency of history proclaimed to be necessary, if faith were to continue. We cannot simply say that the problem should have been left to the philosophers, and that the idealism of Plato was the true legatee of Hebrew prophecy on the intellectual side. For the problem was not the same for the two. Plato and the Greeks had not that sense of continuous historical vocation, and of belonging to a divinely chosen people, which was part and parcel of the religious experience of the Jews. They had not a faith which had been tried through centuries in the furnace of affliction, and had been strengthened through every trial. The apocalyptic stratification of history was an attempt to be true to this historical experience, even when it became bankrupt, and yet at the same time to reach out to another order which lay beyond it.

Nor can we blame Apocalyptic because it falls so far short of the sublime heights reached by prophecy and particularly by Deutero-Isaiah. That prophet, as we have seen, intimates rather than embodies the other-worldly solution. His peculiar re-valuation of suffering and death does not, it is true, find any parallel in Apocalyptic. For the latter writers there is nothing in the present state of the *Hasidim* or "Poverelli" to which they belong, and for whom they speak, which extenuates the utterness of calamity. Their sufferings seem to admit of no spiritual interpretation, still less of any irradiation with heavenly glory, but only of a compensation hereafter. No profound

religious conception, like that of the "Servant," links the martyrdom of this age with the glory of the other. All that is true. But it is not the whole truth. It is also true that the Apocalypticist speaks confidently just where the prophet is indistinct. His emphasis on the Kingdom as coming *ab extra* by God's sole transcendent and arbitrary act indicates the givenness of the things that reveal God : his picture of the Son of Man, whether in Daniel or the similitudes of Enoch, is of one whose origin, as well as his end, is definitely supernatural : he proclaims unequivocally the Resurrection of the Dead. We cannot dismiss a tradition of thought, however crude the images it uses, which found such ample fulfilment for its central ideas in Christ and Christianity.

The New Testament, in fact, combines and vindicates the messages of prophet and apocalypticist alike. Jesus Himself finds need of both, when He seeks to interpret Himself to His people. He is both "Servant" and "Son of Man" : He suffers and dies as "a ransom for many," and He is to rise again and ascend to the right hand of God : the Kingdom involves a transvaluation of values here and now, and is at the same time transcendent, given from above, of God. These are indeed the two *foci* on which the whole Gospel turns, according as the emphasis is on the Incarnate or the Ascended Christ. In the Incarnation and the Cross we have history at its richest, highest, and most full of God ; the potentialities of the temporal order affirmed in one crowning example ; the perfection of Manhood revealing through suffering and death the character of God. Herein the march of events has come, qualitatively speaking, to its goal. There are no higher values to be unfolded. The hope of prophecy is fulfilled. Yet this same Incarnate Son passes on through Time and Death to another mode of being, a Life unlimited by successiveness and uncaged by space. The greater part of the New Testament is concerned with this ascended Christ—His gifts of grace, His heavenly Priesthood, His indwelling of the Church. It was Apocalyptic that prepared men's mind for entrance into this transcendent order, and taught them to conceive of eternal life in terms independent of duration. And we find the same double

strand in Apostolic thought, when it reaches out to the consummation of all things. St. Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians thinks of the Church growing as a Body, rising from earth as a Temple, lengthening and expanding down the generations until "we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."<sup>1</sup> Here is history not disesteemed, but re-interpreted and transfigured, the life in time being interpenetrated by the glory of the heavenly order. This is the culmination of the prophetic attitude to history, as it envisages

the one far-off divine event  
To which the whole creation moves.

But there is another way of approach to this event—that of the Seer of Patmos. *Revelation* speaks of no orderly process of grace, no age-long development, no gradual achievement of God's purpose. All is pure act of God, sudden, decisive, overwhelming. And yet the issue is the same—a redeemed community, lit by the Light of God's Presence and possessed of His eternal Life. "And there shall be night no more: and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv. 13.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CHRIST OF HISTORY

"There is only one other person I can ever think of after this," continued Lamb; but without mentioning a name that once put on a semblance of mortality. "If Shakespeare was to come into the room, we should all rise up to meet him; but if that person was to come into it, we should all fall down and try to kiss the hem of his garment."—HAZLITT.

THERE are various ways in which the incarnate life of Christ may be approached. That which finds most favour to-day is what we may call the method of critical biography. Comparatively speaking, this method is a new thing in Christian literature. The Church of the Fathers was content with the Gospels or with harmonies of them, or with devotional studies of particular elements in our Saviour's life on earth, such as the Temptation, the Transfiguration, or the Cross. This is really the character even of that massive and edifying work of Jeremy Taylor's, entitled *The Life of Our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, where the successive phases and incidents of His life are taken as the foundation on which to build a rich superstructure of teaching and meditation. But a new handling of the subject comes into view shortly after the advent of the Higher Criticism, and, indeed, as a result of it. It was believed that a scientific study of the New Testament documents, regarded simply as documents and treated with the same philosophical presuppositions and the same critical acumen as Wolff and Niebuhr had brought to the early records of Greece and Rome, would render possible a Life of Christ which should be strictly historical, objectively verifiable, and in large measure complete. The story of the attempt to present this biography of Christ has been told with exceptional vividness and colour in Schweitzer's celebrated book, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*.

The work was mainly that of Continental scholars, among whom the names of Strauss in Germany, and Renan in France stand out supreme ; but it was not without orthodox reactions in England ; and the works of Edersheim and Farrar were an attempt to correct the one-sided pictures presented by the critical school.<sup>1</sup> More recently, similar ground has been covered in Italy by the now Catholic philosopher, Papini ; while Dr. Glover's book, *The Jesus of History*, is a biographical characterization of which the presuppositions are those of Puritanism, while the methods are taken from criticism.

All these books are alike, not only as representing an innovation in the main tradition of Christian literature, but also as registering at best only very partial success. The orthodox Lives of Christ are to-day scarcely read ; and if the critical Lives are read, it is as storehouses of suggestive details or (in Renan's case, at least) as a great work of art. No one would think of going to them as one goes to a standard biography. A striking testimony to this failure was borne by Dr. Sanday, whose *Outlines of the Life of Christ* contained a promise of a "larger undertaking" for the future<sup>2</sup> We shall perhaps not be wrong in saying that the permanent value of this little book lies in its limitation to *Outlines* ; and it is generally known that Dr. Sanday himself came to feel that his promise could not be fulfilled. What is the reason of this failure ?

Maurice, the most prophetic figure in Victorian theology, pointed to the root of the matter when the work of Strauss and his disciples was first becoming known in England seventy years ago. Alluding to the critical theory of Christ "as a shadow personage, whom the imagination has clothed, as it does all its heroes, with a certain divinity, really belonging to, and derived from, itself," Maurice notes the amazement and alarm which this theory causes, and proceeds :

"The next step is to look about for some method of

<sup>1</sup> A more recent attempt is that of the Bishop of Gloucester in his *The Life and Times of Jesus the Christ*.

<sup>2</sup> cf. the preface to the second edition (Dec., 1905).

confronting the theory; to see whether we can prove that Strauss and his disciples have misquoted the New Testament, or abused ancient authorities. Perhaps if we cannot establish these points sufficiently by our learning, our German friends, who have been more closely engaged in the battle, may help us. I daresay they can, and that we also may do something for ourselves in that line, if we try. But I am convinced, also, that the effort will be worth next to nothing, if it is made ever so skilfully, if our blows are ever so straight and well directed. That which is a tendency and habit of the heart is not cured by detecting fallacies in the mode in which it is embodied and presented to the intellect. If you have no other way of showing Christ not to be a mystical Being, or a man elevated into a God by the same process which has deified thousands before and since, except by convicting the propounder of the hypothesis of some philological and historical blunders, you may be quite sure that he will prevail, though those blunders were multiplied a thousand-fold."<sup>1</sup>

In other words, the failure lies in the initial assumption that the Life of Christ can be portrayed under the categories, and by the methods, adequate to the portrayal of any other great figure in human history. Granted that assumption, it was not unreasonable to suppose that the Gospels would give, after critical dissection, a sufficient account of the matter. What has been found, on the other hand, is that each Gospel, and indeed each Gospel-source, by itself is something more than a biography. It is the proclamation of a Faith and a Life, to be believed and lived now. Each is fragmentary, in the sense that its outward limits are narrow and defined; but these limits are, to use the language of Goethe, the conditions of inward limitlessness, and it is the inwardly limitless factor which for ever baffles the would-be biographer. The Christ portrayed here is not the "Carpenter's son," but the Man of Sorrows, the Lion of Judah, the Judge of the World; and only Faith can see Him. His biography is still being written, not in print,

<sup>1</sup> *Theological Essays*, pp. 66, 67. 1853.

but on the “fleshy tables of the heart,” in the history of the Church ; and its author is the Holy Spirit of God.

We are driven, therefore, to seek another line of approach ; and it is indicated by the distinctions commonly met with in modern theology between “the Jesus of History” and “The Christ of Faith.” The time is opportune for a fresh treatment of this problem, for it is coming to be more and more admitted that “the Christ of Faith” is to be traced back—not only to the Middle Ages, or to the Fathers, as used to be supposed—but to St. Paul and the Apostles themselves. We have there all the essentials of what the Church has found Christ to be. The questions to be asked are, first, What is Christ? and second, Did it really happen ? We go to the New Testament, not with the preconceived notion that it is on its historical side like any other historical book, but with the knowledge that it is primarily a record of supernatural experience, such as we, in our measure, share to-day. And our purpose is to see in what sense this experience is grounded in history ; what is its relation to external fact ; and whether “the Jesus of History” and “the Christ of Faith” are not really two complementary aspects of One Historic Christ.

It is not difficult to sum up shortly what “the Christ of Faith” meant for St. Paul and St. John. For them, as for Christian dogma throughout the ages, Christ is the One from Heaven, only-begotten of the Father, unique, that is to say, in kind among men, containing in Himself from all eternity the fulness of the God-head ; Who yet came to live as man a life of perfect humility and love, and died a sacrificial death, and was raised, soul and body, in glory. Exalted to the Father’s side, He now sends down His Spirit on all believers, and by the Spirit’s operation cleanses the faithful from sin in Baptism and imparts to them the supernatural life which belongs to and is the predominant mark of the Kingdom of Heaven. This fellowship and participation in His Life He renews and strengthens in the Holy Eucharist, so that believers are “in Christ,” and He in them ; members of His Body, the Church, and indwelt of His Spirit ; and His Body is to extend to embrace all

mankind. Christhood means mediation between God and man by a Divine-human Person, of heavenly, i.e., supernatural, origin, yet born of a woman ; Who died and rose again and ascended, and quickens the Church with His life-giving Spirit and Sacraments. By historical religion we mean that this offer of transference from the natural to the supernatural life and experience has actually occurred in human history. We are not now concerned with the philosophical explanation or justification of this *mythos*, as Plato would have called it ; but with its claim to be a *mythos* which came true.<sup>1</sup> The examination of that claim can be reduced perhaps within more manageable limits to-day than at any time within the last hundred years. That this is so is due in part to Criticism, in part to the progress of psychology.

The crucial point in this enquiry is St. Paul ; for in him first the "Christ of faith" and the "Jesus of history" are explicitly and indisputably fused. Opinions may differ as to whether the Hebraic or the Hellenistic elements predominate in his Christology ; but no one doubts that the Christ whom he believed in and served was, to his mind, both supernatural and historical. Moreover, Christ so conceived is inwoven into the warp of a spiritual experience of which he and his companion, St. Luke, give us full and detailed pictures. There is no one in the pages of the Bible whom we know so well as St. Paul ; and when he says quite simply, "To me to live is Christ,"<sup>2</sup> we know

<sup>1</sup> cf. F. W. Robertson, *Lectures on the Epistles to the Corinthians*, pp. 246, 247 (1860). "By historical Christianity, however, we mean not those truths abstractedly, but considered as actually existing in the life of Jesus Christ ; not merely the truth that God is our Father, but the belief that though "no man hath seen God at any time," yet "the only-begotten Son in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him": not merely the truth of the sonship of our humanity, but that there is One above all others Who, in the highest and truest sense, is the only-begotten Son of God ; not merely that goodness and spiritual excellence is the righteousness which is acceptable in God's sight, but that these are not mere dreams and aspirations of our humanity, that they are actual realities, and have truly existed here below in the life of One—"The Man Christ Jesus"; not merely the abstract *law* of self-sacrifice, but the *real* self-sacrifice—the one atoning sacrifice which has redeemed the whole world. Now, to this historical Christianity the Apostle bears the strongest testimony when he comes to these facts, that Jesus Christ had been seen by Cephas, and the other Apostles, and by the five hundred brethren, and by himself."

<sup>2</sup> Phil. i. 21.

that we have a perfectly genuine utterance of the heart. "It pleased God," he says, "to reveal His Son in me."<sup>1</sup> That is the essence of his testimony. It was "by revelation of Jesus Christ"<sup>2</sup> that his faith came. Not that he belittled instruction from others; he alludes to it more than once and with gratitude. But it was the event we call his conversion which was the supremely vital moment of his life. There, then, if anywhere, we shall find an important link in the chain of evidence on which a just estimate of Christian origins must be built. There we have a fact not seriously denied, either as to its historical occurrence or as to its external antecedents and results, in any quarter. Psychology, moreover, illuminating many of its details, enables us to see lines of connexion, both backwards and forwards, which are invisible to literary criticism alone. Here, in the soul of this man who lived intensely as Jew, as Roman, and as Greek—the heir of three civilizations—Christ enters with unquestioned vividness and power into human experience; we can isolate the moment from the rest of human history much as a scientist will isolate the relevant materials under a microscope; and we are able to say with considerable exactitude Who this Christ is who thus enters, whence He comes, and whither He goes.

The conversion itself is explained by Dr. Jung on its psychological side as follows:

"Although the moment of a conversion seems sometimes quite sudden and unexpected, yet we know from repeated experience that such a fundamental occurrence always has a long period of unconscious incubation. It is only when the preparation is complete, that is to say, when the individual is ready to be converted, that the new view breaks forth with great emotion. St. Paul had already been a Christian for a long time, but unconsciously; hence his fanatical resistance to the Christians, because fanaticism exists chiefly in individuals who are compensating for secret doubts. The incident of his hearing the voice of Christ on his way to Damascus marks the moment when

<sup>1</sup> Gal. i. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. i. 11.

the unconscious complex of Christianity became conscious. That the auditory phenomenon should represent Christ is explained by the already existing unconscious Christian complex. The complex, being unconscious, was projected by St. Paul on to the external world as if it did not belong to him. Unable to conceive of himself as a Christian, and on account of his resistance to Christ, he became blind, and could only regain his sight through submission to a Christian, that is to say, through his complete submission to Christianity. Psychogenic blindness is, according to my experience, always due to an unwillingness to see, i.e., to understand and to accept, what is incompatible with the conscious attitude. This was obviously the case with St. Paul. His willingness to see corresponds with his fanatical resistance to Christianity. This resistance was never wholly extinguished, a fact of which we have proof in the Epistles. It broke forth at times in the fits he suffered from. It is certainly a great mistake to call his fits epileptic. There is no trace of epilepsy in them; on the contrary, St. Paul himself in his epistles gives hints enough as to the real nature of the illness. They are clearly psychogenic fits, which really mean a return to the old Saul-complex, repressed through conversion, in the same way as there had previously been a repression of the complex of Christianity.”<sup>1</sup>

The pure subjectiveness of this explanation is in keeping with the whole method of empirical psychology, which is not as such concerned with objective reality: though we have seen strong grounds in earlier chapters of this book for regarding religious experience as supernaturally and objectively determined. But, even as it stands, Dr. Jung’s statement raises questions beyond itself which would seem both to demand and to be capable of some answer on the same empirical plane. What was this “Christ-complex” which emerged from incubation into consciousness on the road to Damascus? Of what materials was it composed, and what occasioned its emergence? And what was its

<sup>1</sup> Proc. S. P. R., May, 1920, quoted by Dr. Thouless, *Theology*, I. 329, 330.

relation to that group or community into which St. Paul was received as a result of it ?

(1) It is common to speak of St. Paul's " vision " on the Damascus journey : but it is to be noted that none of the three records of the conversion say or suggest that he saw Jesus. What he saw was a light ; Jesus he heard. And the dialogue which ensues reveals something more than a simple " complex." In the sentiment he had been repressing and struggling with, the emotional life was organized around the idea of an object which had, as it were, two faces. The first question, " Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me ? " shows that his thoughts and doubts were centred in that Christian community to whose destruction he had been particularly commissioned, and was devoting himself with ardour. It was that community which as a matter of fact he had been persecuting. And now it suddenly addresses him in the accents of a Person, and of One who speaks with authority. " Who art Thou, Lord ? " . . . " I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest." It is not simply " Jesus " whom he had been resisting, but Jesus embodied and incarnate in His Church. The conversion is not simply from unbelief in Jesus to belief in Him ; there is involved simultaneously an identification—the identification of the Christian community with its Lord. What he realized was two things together, that in persecuting the Church he had been persecuting Jesus, and that Jesus was what the Church said He was, namely, " Lord." Among the elements which now suddenly became reassociated and regrouped in his mind there were not merely the ideas of right and wrong, of cruelty and humanity, of Jesus and of the Pharisees : there was also the idea of the actual concrete community, the men and women, whom he had been haling to prison or death.

(2) We are driven back, therefore, from St. Paul's experience on the road to Damascus to his experience of Christianity beforehand.<sup>1</sup> It seems probable that he had not been in Jerusalem at the time of the Crucifixion, four

<sup>1</sup> Batifol has an excellent section on this in *The Credibility of the Gospel*, pp. 64-88.

years earlier ; but he had been domiciled there for a decade or more before that as a student in the school of Gamaliel, and in those student days the work and claims of Jesus may well have crossed the line of his thoughts. At any rate this would certainly have been the case when he returned from a vacation visit to Tarsus after the Lord's Death and Resurrection. Then he must have found the ecclesiastical circles of Jerusalem agog about the new movement ; and indeed his own master, Gamaliel, was playing no inconspicuous part in the controversy. It is to this, if not to the earlier, period that St. Paul alludes in one of his Corinthian letters. " Wherefore," he says, " we henceforth know no man after the flesh : even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more " (2 Cor. v. 16). He is thinking of the time<sup>1</sup> when he had known Him on the lips of rumour, credulous perhaps but critical, full of gossip as to details of what Jesus had said and done, yet without clue or conviction as to who or what He was. And we can be sure that He would hear all that was to be said against Christ—how He was a Pretender and a Sabbath-breaker, and claimed to be God's Son and Messiah ; and yet, how He inspired a handful of Galilean followers with astonishing effrontery and large measure of success.

All this he would hear, and more, and so knew Christ "after the flesh."<sup>2</sup> But there was nothing here perhaps to compel decision. What compelled decision and rendered nugatory the moderate counsels of Gamaliel was an ecclesiastical development which profoundly concerned both Christianity and Judaism. The situation has been described with his usual lucidity by Professor Lake. Among the Jews at Jerusalem three sections can be distinguished, viz., (a) orthodox Aramaic-speaking Jews, such as the Pharisees and Rabbis, of which Gamaliel and Nicodemus were typical ; (b) orthodox Greek-speaking Jews or Hellenists, such as no doubt St. Paul and his family were ; and (c) " Liberal"

<sup>1</sup> For a full discussion of the reference in these words see Plummer, *in loc.*

<sup>2</sup> An instructive comment on these words is to be found in the description of the Jews' state of mind given in John viii. 15-30.

Hellenists, of which Philo may be taken as an example. So long as the Christian community could be regarded as a synagogue, having peculiar views indeed but not dangerously heretical, within the first of these groups, no serious trouble occurred. The critical event was the introduction into a central position in the Church of a new element—the element of "Liberal" Hellenism—through the appointment of the Seven (Acts vi.) "So long as, before their conversion, they had been merely "Liberals," or the Twelve had been merely believers in Jesus, each had been unpopular, but generally free from active persecution; but when Stephen, and later on Peter and Paul, combined these causes of offence, the wrath of the Orthodox knew no bounds."<sup>1</sup>

The Christ, then, with whom St. Paul was most deeply concerned before his conversion, was the Christ of St. Stephen. In Stephen, Jesus presented Himself to the consciousness of Saul in lineaments which were largely intelligible—the lineaments of "Liberal" Hellenistic Judaism. He whom Christians called "Lord" was now closely associated with a religious party or tradition, which He had long known and to which He had a deep-rooted antipathy. The doubts he had experienced as to the claims of Jesus now settled down into a vigorous hatred. Rightly or wrongly, he identified Jesus with a contempt for the Temple and the Mosaic law, which was already a dangerous feature in Hellenistic Judaism. He was convinced that this movement must be crushed, and he viewed with satisfaction the violent death of its eloquent Christian spokesman.

That is the first element to be noted in the Christ-complex which Saul was repressing. But there was another and a more potent one, and he had not reckoned on it.

<sup>1</sup> *Beginnings of Christianity*, Vol. I., p. 308. cf. also *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, pp. 16 ff., *Landmarks of Early Christianity*, pp. 57 ff. In the two last-named books Prof. Lake makes it clear that he thinks the orthodox Hellenists to have been the first to take serious offence at Christianity. In that case Christianity would have effected a reconciliation between the two parties of orthodox Jews—the Hebraic and the Hellenistic—a fact wholly compatible with the high commission entrusted to St. Paul. The situation is also admirably discussed by W. L. Knox in his *St. Paul and the Church of Jerusalem*—a book which no student of Christian beginnings can afford to neglect.

It was engendered in his mind by that very scene of Stephen's martyrdom which had seemed his moment of triumph. It has been truly observed that one of St. Paul's sensitive disposition was not likely to watch such human suffering as stoning involved without emotion. But there was something there to move him more than bodily pain ; there was a sublime spiritual witness. And it is that spiritual witness which gives to St. Stephen his indispensable place in any true history of Christian origins. The experience of it made a haunting impression on St. Paul, which never left him. The climax is thus described in Acts (vii. 55-60) :

" But he [Stephen], being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold ! I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God. ~~But~~ they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord ; and they cast him out of the city, and stoned him ; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he said this he fell asleep. And Saul was consenting unto his death."

The question from which we must take our departure is the content and origin of Stephen's vision. In the first place it may be observed that it bears all the marks of the prophetic "trance" or "ecstasy." This mental condition appears as a common accompaniment of "apocalypse" or revelation, both in the first century and afterwards.<sup>1</sup> It seems to involve, in the language of psychology, a dissociated state of consciousness analogous to that familiar in dreams.<sup>2</sup> In this mental state there emerges a newly-constellated mental system reconstructed out of the elements of previous conscious experience—memories, wishes, ideas,

<sup>1</sup> See *The Christian Prophets* (E. C. Selwyn, D.D.) pp. 5f., 12 n.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Dr. Morton Prince in Mrs. Arnold Forster's *Studies in Dreams*, pp. 13-15.

imaginings. Psychology as such is not concerned with the objective determination of any of these elements; it examines them simply as they occur in experience. It is obvious, however, that if contact with, or knowledge of, God is humanly transmissible, and in so far as it is so, analysis of the psychological *media* of transmission is of great importance.

In the case of Stephen, it is possible to account for the elements reassociated in his vision with considerable accuracy. We have not only the narrator's description of how Stephen "saw the glory of God," but the martyr's own description in his own words: "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." Two features in this sentence go far to prove its essential authenticity. In the first place, "the Son of Man" was a title of our Lord which rapidly dropped out of use in the Christian Church. And, in the second place, this is the only passage in the New Testament where the ascended Christ is spoken of as "standing" at God's right hand. Had the author of Acts put the words into Stephen's mouth, it is overwhelmingly probable that he would have used the ordinary Christian conception of Christ as "sitting" or "seated"<sup>1</sup> We may reckon, therefore, that we are dealing with an original utterance of St. Stephen.

The opening of the heavens to which he alludes is a significant feature of prophetic vision. Thus, Ezekiel relates that "the heavens were opened," when he saw his visions.<sup>2</sup> A similar experience befell Christ at His Baptism.<sup>3</sup> "The heaven was opened" for St. Peter, when the universality of the Gospel was revealed to him,<sup>4</sup> and for the Seer of Patmos before he saw the Divine Figure on the white horse.<sup>5</sup> In every case the experience coincides with some revelation that was felt to be especially momentous, and led in fact to momentous consequences. The mention of it here is sufficient by itself to establish St. Stephen's place in a line of spiritual happenings of the first importance for the history of religion.

<sup>1</sup> cf. Acts ii. 30, Col. iii. 1, Heb. x. 12, xii. 2, etc.; 1 Peter iii. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Ez. i. 1   <sup>3</sup> Matt. iii. 16.   <sup>4</sup> Acts x. 11.   <sup>5</sup> Rev. xix. 11.

But the essential content of the experience is contained in the second clause, "and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." The words recall us at once to Christ's own prediction before Caiaphas : " Nevertheless, I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man, sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matt. xxvi. 64, cf. Mk. xiv. 62). It is not easy to determine, in view of the discrepant records, the exact form which our Lord's words took on this occasion ; and it is not impossible that the apocalyptic terms used were somewhat heightened by those who heard and reported them.<sup>1</sup> At the same time it would be an arbitrary treatment of the evidence which would decline to allow that Jesus did before Caiaphas assert the prospective vindication in experience of His supernatural claims, and assert it in terms closely parallel to those which He had used on earlier occasions in His Ministry. The utterance belongs to that eschatological strand in our Lord's teaching which has puzzled criticism for a generation ; and this is not the place—nor is there any need—to revive that discussion. Suffice it to say that Christ's prediction of an imminent revelation of the supernatural in human experience through the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven centred in the "Son of Man" seems to be more and more recognized as a cardinal element in His message ; while the attempt to argue that He did not identify the Son of Man with Himself shows no signs as yet of overcoming the inherent difficulties which beset it.<sup>2</sup>

I have said that St. Stephen's experience recalls our Lord's utterance before Caiaphas : it recalls it, because it fulfils it. For it is the experience of the Ascended Christ, invested with the glory and authority of heavenly power. The ascendancy which marks the Lord's relations with

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Streeter in *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem*, p. 430. But the company at this trial, though mainly composed of "enemies," no doubt contained some secret adherents, and these latter may be the source of the narrative.

<sup>2</sup> I have dealt at some length with this whole problem in my book, *The Teaching of Christ* (Longmans, 1915), ch. v. I believe that the main drift of the arguments there used still holds good ; though the connexion of St. Stephen's vision with our Lord's prediction before Caiaphas renders possible a simpler explanation of it than I there urged. Cf. also Burkitt's *Christian Beginnings*, pp. 30 ff.

all with whom He had intercourse—with the Twelve, with the possessed, with the crowds, with the common people, with Mary, with Caiaphas or Pilate—seemed at the Crucifixion to be extinguished. By the Resurrection it was restored in the hearts of the Disciples. In the Ascension it was completed, freed from the limitations of time and space, and made available for all mankind. St. Stephen, the first martyr, is the witness, not only to Christ, but to Christ ascended ; indeed, it was because he first grasped the full implications of what the Ascension meant that he suffered death before any of the Apostles. Was Christ from Heaven or of men, natural or supernatural, divine or human ? St. Stephen confessed Him supernatural, divine, heavenly, in terms which none could mistake and which sounded the death-knell of Judaism. There was nothing to be done but to do away with Him.

But we may go further. His last words were a prayer for pardon for his enemies. A negative criticism will no doubt claim that we have here simply the imputation to Stephen of a noble trait in the death-scene of his Master. Were that so, it would be more natural to find the words more closely approximating than they do ; and if St. Stephen was the first to reproduce in martyrdom the spirit of his Lord, experience even in our own day shows that he was not the last.<sup>1</sup> More natural is it to suppose that it was the wounded Jesus whom St. Stephen saw in that moment of intuition ; and that it was the sight of those wounds which melted him to his knees with the cry of prayer for his enemies, overcome by the love and compassion of Christ. Thus from the open confession of Jesus as the ascended Lord he is led on to proclaim the Ascension as the victory of pitying, pardoning love.

This scene was watched by one who took no active part in the violent deed, but consented to it. Saul had a training and education behind him which would have made him ill at ease in a frenzied crowd ; but he was on its side. It was a righteous penalty. And yet, even as he watched, he felt the pricks. Though he had decided his own answer

<sup>1</sup> cf. the evidence from Russia, *Theology*, v. pp. 224 ff.

to the controversy about Jesus and was resolutely opposed to the notion that He was "from heaven," there were things in what men told of Him, even "after the flesh" (2 Cor. v. 16), which kept tipping the balance on the other side. He could not rid himself of the germs of a Christ-sentiment, try as he might. Jesus whom they crucified—how could He be the Son of Man? That question still recurred. And when he heard Stephen's words, he knew enough of what Jesus had claimed to catch the connexion. His mind would go back, indeed, trained Rabbi that he was, behind the reputed words of Jesus to the prophecy in Daniel. Certainly it had been prophesied that "one like unto a son of man" should be "brought near to the Ancient of Days" (Dan. vii. 13). There were words of Jesus which seemed to say that Daniel's vision, and still more its development in Enoch, was on the verge of fulfilment. Could Jesus be that Son of Man after all? Did this strange community of Galileans and Hellenists represent that kingdom of the saints foretold in prophecy? These were questions with which no doubt St. Paul was familiar. And now he heard them answered in circumstances which made the answer peculiarly impressive. Here was someone of superhuman courage and magnanimity, who said that he *saw* Jesus as the Son of Man exalted at God's right hand. A faith so asserted and bearing such fruits could not be utterly foolish. And so his doubts grew. He must act, if he would drive them away; and he obtained the commission to help to extirpate the heresy.

But in fact he was already conquered. The sentiment he had so resolutely disowned waxed stronger and stronger. He could not deny the Supernatural on the face and lips of St. Stephen. He could not rid himself of the thought that its true Source was what St. Stephen said it was—Jesus, crucified and ascended. Nor could He dissociate the persecuted community from the Lord whom St. Stephen confessed. And at last the conviction burst through into full consciousness, as he journeyed to Damascus. That which had haunted him with mysterious and authoritative instance now stood revealed. "I am Jesus Whom thou

persecutest." Jesus crucified is the supernatural Son of Man. Jesus is the Life and constitutive principle of the Christian community. The Church is that Kingdom of the Saints of which prophecy had spoken.

There are many other ligaments, as we shall see directly, binding the Catholic faith of St. Paul with the Jesus of history as our documentary sources portray Him. But this is the central one and the earliest in time. And it has in it what we may call, to continue the metaphor, certain points of special tension. There is first the culmination of our Lord's claim in the prediction before Pilate; secondly, the Ascension; thirdly, St. Stephen's experience of the crucified and ascended Lord; and lastly, the impact of this experience upon the mind of St. Paul. Thus, the analysis of two moments of religious experience, both of which are described for us in minute detail in our evidence, leads to the recovery of a forgotten factor in the story of Christian origins—the factor of the Ascension. It is safe to say that hitherto the Ascension has been regarded by critical students of Christian origins as a stumbling-block rather than a link in the evidence. That a doctrine so fundamental as that of the Ascension should be thus brought back into the main stream of Christian apologetic in itself lends weight to the argument or theory which requires it. The Ascension is thus presented as the change in our Lord's condition which enabled Him to enter into religious experience though withdrawn from the human limitations of time and space. And it presents itself with the character of necessity, to those at least who accept the broad evidence of the activity of the Supernatural in human consciousness. Without it we cannot explain either Christ's prediction or St. Stephen's vision; with it, we have the fact which gives significance to them both.

Again, we must note that the Christ of Faith who thus passes from the mind of St. Stephen to that of St. Paul exhibits in the experience of both those two "notes" which mark the Jesus of Synoptic history—the note of supernatural authority and the note of complete humiliation

and meekness. Those two ideas provide indeed the contexts in which nearly all the Synoptic allusions to "the Son of Man" appear.<sup>1</sup> Our Lord seems to have chosen the title<sup>2</sup> as the best available for connoting that paradox of Divinity in Humanity which lay at the root of His consciousness; and it is of significance that precisely the same paradox should be found on the lips of the two first witnesses who knew Him by faith alone. We shall recur to the point later.

(3) Other links between St. Paul and the Jesus of History were soon to be forged. His conversion is not completed until he is received into the Church by Ananias. The point is important as a further evidence—for so psychology reads it—that he was converted, not to Jesus only, but to Christ in His Church. We do not know how the Christian community at Damascus had come into being. St. Luke may be right in thinking that it was an offshoot of the Liberal Hellenistic Christianity which Stephen represented at Jerusalem. But it is at least not impossible that it had an earlier origin and dates in fact from the Galilean ministry of Our Lord Himself.<sup>3</sup> This disciple, Ananias, may even have been among the five hundred brethren who had seen the risen Christ (I Cor. xv. 6). Be that as it may, the Christianity of this Damascene community was of no undeveloped kind. Ananias "laid his hands" upon St. Paul, and baptized him; and within a few days he who had been the Church's persecutor was preaching Jesus in the synagogues as "the Son of God" (Acts ix. 20).<sup>4</sup>

Some doubt hangs over St. Paul's immediate movements at this time; but the most probable view seems to be that, after a period of solitude and meditation in the country adjacent to Damascus, he returned there for nearly three years, and then, when his safety was threatened, left the

<sup>1</sup> cf. *The Teaching of Christ*, p. 149.

<sup>2</sup> Profs. Lake and Foakes Jackson follow Wellhausen and Wrede in believing that our Lord did not call Himself by this title, but that it was given to Him later. I have discussed what seem to me the insuperable difficulties of this view elsewhere; cf., op. cit., pp. 138, 139.

<sup>3</sup> cf. Schütz, *Apostel und Jünger*.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. McNeile places this "preaching" after the visit to "Arabia." In the main I follow his chronology here: *St. Paul*, pp. 8-21.

city and went to Jerusalem to "see Peter." The word used by St. Paul when describing the purpose of this visit (Gal. i. 18) is significant; it means properly to visit for purposes of information. And it is difficult not to connect this visit to St. Peter with the allusion St. Paul makes later in his letters to the instruction on various matters of Christian history which he had "received."<sup>1</sup> Be that as it may, it is certain that, whether from St. Peter on this visit or from others of the Twelve during his second and third visits to Jerusalem, St. Paul received considerable information as to the life and teaching of the Lord in Whom he now believed.

We may distinguish three elements in the enrichment of St. Paul's faith which was due to his contact with the Christian community in Damascus and in Jerusalem. (a) There is first what he calls "the Gospel" consisting of the facts that Christ "died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and was buried, and rose again the third day, and appeared," etc. (1 Cor. xv. 3). The points he seems to emphasize particularly are the reality of Christ's Death and Resurrection, and their significance as the fulfilment of prophecy. The language presupposes a careful study of what prophecy had to teach about the Cross and man's Redemption, and an enquiry into the evidence of the Resurrection. These things were part of the tradition of the Church, and St. Paul received them as such. It is perhaps to this period of instruction that we should also refer such phrases as "born of a woman" (Gal. iv. 4) and "like unto us" (Phil. ii. 7 f.) in his description of Christ. Certainly Batiffol is abundantly justified when he says that "the transcendental dogmatism of St. Paul presupposes facts; and these facts are the historic life of Christ, His Passion and His Resurrection."<sup>2</sup>

(b) A second element in his teaching for which St. Paul refers to what he had himself been taught is that which concerns the institution of the Holy Eucharist.<sup>3</sup> So much care has been bestowed upon the detailed varia-

<sup>1</sup> cf. espec. 1 Cor. xv. 2, xi. 23.

<sup>2</sup> op. cit. pp. 71, 72.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 23-26.

tions between this narrative and that of the Synoptics that its speaking testimony to the event of the Last Supper itself has tended to be obscured. Yet, as Jülicher says, "the words of institution in the Lord's Supper, which even then had become a fixed form, presuppose a detailed picture of the Supper. The words, "In the night when the Lord Jesus was betrayed" surely contain *in nuce* a large part of the history of the Passion. The reference to "the night" implies a chronological knowledge of the events in question, the words "the betrayal" imply knowledge of the traitor and the arrest."<sup>1</sup> When we consider the large proportion of their space which each of the Evangelists gives to the record of the Passion, we cannot doubt that St. Paul's instruction at the hands of the Apostles in the happenings of those days and nights was detailed, thorough, and complete.

(c) Thirdly, St. Paul cites the Lord's teaching as indisputable and authoritative in regard to certain practical matters; while some of his ethical maxims, though falling short of direct allusions to Christ's recorded words, seem to derive very closely from them. In two cases we can trace the references in the Synoptic Gospels: his charge on the subject of Marriage in 1 Cor. vii. 10 ff., is clearly based on our Lord's utterances as recorded in Mark x. 3-12; and he claims the right, even while declining to exercise it, to take payment for his services on the basis of a saying of Jesus which may well be that in Luke x. 7. In both these cases the force of the argument depends on the acknowledged authority of the words of Christ; while in the former he emphasizes this the more strongly by contrasting it with the smaller measure of authority which attaches to judgments of his own. Again, the beautiful words recorded in Acts as St. Paul's parting message to the Ephesian Elders who had come to meet him at Miletus contain a saying of Jesus, which, though not recorded in the Gospels, bears all the stamp of genuineness: he bids them remember the words of Jesus, how He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts xx. 35). So, too,

<sup>1</sup> *Paul and Jesus*, p. 20, quoted by Batiffol, op. cit. p. 70.

when He insists on the law of meekness towards enemies (Rom. xii. 14) and on the sovereign obligation of Love (Rom. xiii. 8-10), it seems most reasonable to suppose that he has in mind the words of the Sermon on the Mount. As Dr. Rashdall says, "This identity between St. Paul's moral teaching and his Master's, this appreciation of its very essence, cannot be a mere accident ; it can be accounted for by no theory so natural as the supposition that, like other Christians, he knew the traditions about Christ's teaching which were afterwards embodied in the Gospels."<sup>1</sup> Nor do I see any reason to object to the view that some at least of this teaching was known to St. Paul before his conversion, so long as it is recognized that it only came to have authority for him after he had learnt by other means as well that the Giver of this teaching was "from heaven."

St. Peter was not the only source of Christian instruction available for St. Paul ; he may well have learnt much from his constant companion, Barnabas; and some scholars<sup>2</sup> have supposed that he was not unacquainted with a written document containing sayings of Jesus and perhaps some narrative of events. But St. Peter and the circle at Jerusalem of which he was the centre were no doubt his principal source of information; and it is therefore of some interest and importance to note what the Gospel meant, and what Jesus meant, for St. Peter at this time. We are not without evidence, for Acts relates an address given by him in the house of Cornelius the Gentile, after he had been taught through a vision that the universalism already found in, or read into, the Gospel by St. Stephen and the Seven was indeed part of the whole counsel of God.

God sent, he begins,<sup>3</sup> the message of the Gospel to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ ; He is Lord of All. They know the salient events of that Mission—how the prophetic ministry of Jesus which followed on the Baptist's revival spread from Galilee through

<sup>1</sup> *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> e.g., Sanday.

<sup>3</sup> *Acts* x. 36-43.

all Judæa ; and how Jesus, divinely endowed with spiritual power, went about doing good and healing and exorcizing. The Twelve were witnesses of all He did ; and, after the Jews had crucified Him, they, His disciples and constant companions, chosen for this very purpose, were there to witness His Resurrection and to testify that it was He whom God had appointed Judge of quick and dead. And for the meaning of this Life and Death and Resurrection the prophets were their surety ; it was that all who believed on Him might have remission of sins through His Name.

The first thing to note is the large common element uniting this summary of St. Peter's teaching with the instructions about our Lord's Death and Resurrection which St. Paul tells the Corinthians that he had " received."<sup>1</sup> In both alike there is the same emphasis on the " gospel " as consisting pre-eminently in Christ's Death and Resurrection, on His appearances, and on the interpretation of the atoning significance of these events given by ancient prophecy.<sup>2</sup> We seem clearly to be dealing with a *corpus* of essential principles of faith and teaching. Equally striking is the absence from St. Peter's address of the Pauline doctrine of Christ as " the man from heaven." For St. Peter the beginning of Christ's redemptive work appears to date from the fact that God " anointed Him with Holy Spirit and Power " (Acts x. 38). But it would be a mistake to claim on the basis of this and similar passages in Acts that the earliest Christology was therefore consciously " Adoptionist." What is true is that it was inchoate and undeveloped.<sup>3</sup> The contrast is easily explicable if we consider the contrast in personal approach of the Apostles severally. St. Peter could never outgrow the years of intimate discipleship to Jesus in the days of His flesh, when he had felt and watched the exercise of His transcendent power, had found his own faith fail in the hour of trial, and had experienced the uplifting and pardoning influence of the Resurrection. And

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. xv. 3 ff.; cf. *supra*. p. 120.

<sup>2</sup> cf. τὸ γενόμενον ρῆμα in Acts x. 37 with εὐαγγελισάμην in I Cor. xv. 2.

<sup>3</sup> cf. Dr. Bigg's criticism of the charge of Adoptionism brought against I Peter in his Commentary (I.C.C.) p. 135.

he was not, as St. Paul was, a trained theologian. That crucial intuition by which he had been the first to confess his Master's Christhood at Cæsarea Philippi (Mark viii. 29) did not mean an immediate apprehension of all that Christhood must involve in its cosmic relations ; and the development of his thought along those lines had been foreclosed by the swift turn which the Master Himself had given it in another direction when He went on at once to speak of His approaching Passion. So far as concerned the metaphysical implicates of his faith in Christ, St. Peter kept within the mental limits prescribed by his upbringing and his experience ; to claim him as an Adoptionist is as unreasonable as to expect to find the Nicene formula in his words ; the truth is that his Christology sufficed for his needs, and he was content with that.

St. Paul's approach, on the other hand, was very different. To him, as a Rabbi, and as acquainted moreover with Greek philosophy, Messiahship or Christhood was a term of rich theological and metaphysical association. It is incredible that a man of so cosmopolitan a mind as he should not have related his Jewish Messianism to the conceptions of the world with which his wide education had familiarized him ; and his mind would inevitably have clung with especial obstinacy to those conceptions of Messiah in Jewish literature which laid stress upon his transcendent functions and relations. In those years when he first awoke to the existence of the Christian movement, the storm-centre of his questionings must have been the claim of Jesus to be "the Son of Man." That claim had seemed to be proved blasphemous by the miserable end to which the Claimant had come. On the other hand, if it could be made good, then it meant that Jesus was that One from heaven which the Christ, when He came, was to be. And as that was the issue on which all hinged, so too it was the point where through the process of his conversion St. Paul entered into the Christian faith. While St. Peter's mind had flashed with the conviction that Jesus was the Christ, St. Paul's insight was into the converse truth that the Christ—the supernatural and transcendent Christ,

who was to claim the whole world for Judaism—was Jesus.<sup>1</sup>

It will be convenient to sum up the course of our argument to this point. We began from the distinction commonly met with in modern theology between “the Jesus of History” and “the Christ of Faith.” That distinction indicates a gap in our knowledge of Christian origins with which we cannot rest content. Liberal Protestantism tends to fill this gap by postulating an activity of syncretistic thought in the earliest Christian community which overlaid the simple primitive Gospel with alien metaphysical ideas from other sources. The more penetrating criticism of Professor Lake and others sees the fallacy of this “over-laying” theory, but none the less cannot fill the gap except with a query. In the foregoing pages we have adduced certain evidence and certain considerations which go far to render the query unnecessary. They show us the Christ of the earliest Church, in the decade immediately following the Resurrection ; and they show Him both as tradition portrayed Him and as immediate experience revealed Him. These two lines of evidence, while in part covering different ground and laying emphasis on different details, concur in the main lineaments of the Christ whom they present. They bear testimony to One who combined in Himself a majesty of Divine Nature with an infinite and infinitely significant meekness. The words He had spoken while on earth had sovereign and abiding authority ; His Resurrection, vouched for by the Twelve, and His ascended life at God’s right hand, known in experience by St. Stephen, marked Him as the Messiah of prophecy ; and He was to “come again” in full revelation of power. But at the same time He had been “born of a woman,” had worn “a slave’s guise” (Phil. ii.), and had been crucified. Is this Figure, who is the centre of the community’s life, the Jesus of History or the Christ of Faith ? Or is He not rather both ?

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Mozley points out to me that the same belief underlies the argument of Apollos recorded in Acts xviii. 28, where “the Christ” should rightly be taken as subject. The argument presupposes some such question as “Who is this Son of God whom you Christians preach ?” and the answer, “Jesus.”

It is at this point that the Gospel evidence comes to clinch the argument; for the Gospels present us with One who is wholly in keeping with this Christ of St. Peter and St. Paul. And this is true, not only of each Gospel separately, but of each and all of their sources. Indeed, it is the emphasis on one or other of those elements which we have seen to be cardinal in early Christianity which seems to provide the *motifs* for the different records underlying and built up into the Gospels as they stand. It was because of the supreme and unquestioned authority attaching to Christ's words that the first collections of His sayings began to be made. It was to show the supernatural majesty and power of Jesus, the Lion of Judah and the Judge of the World, that St. Mark composed his Gospel. It was to draw out the universality of God's "tender mercies" revealed in our Redemption that St. Luke penned what was in all probability the first edition of his work<sup>1</sup>—a work steeped in the catholic humanitarianism of the movement that St. Stephen handed over by his martyrdom to St. Paul. St. Matthew, whether or not he worked upon a collection of Old Testament "oracles" about Jesus, represents the maturity of that process of thought, already salient in the first generation of believers, which sought the interpretation of Christ and of Christianity in the utterances of ancient prophecy. Finally, St. John develops the cosmic and metaphysical implications of the majesty and the meekness which were the chief characteristics of his Master, reading the first as the necessary prerogative of the Word of God made flesh, and the second as the vesture of Eternal Love when He cleanses the world from sin.

It is often supposed that the Higher Criticism of the Gospels has impaired the force of their testimony to Christ as both God and Man. Perhaps this was natural in the 19th century, when criticism was often used with a conscious bias against Catholic orthodoxy and historical and literary analysis were combined with frankly Protestant

<sup>1</sup> See Canon Streeter's hypothesis, first published in the *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1921, and apparently endorsed by Prof. Lake in the *Harvard Theological Review*, Jan., 1922.

or rationalistic presuppositions. But such a fear of criticism is not natural or necessary to-day. It is an instrument and a method, and cannot by itself either destroy or substantiate a Faith. The most radical criticism cannot divest the central Figure of the Gospels of His authority, which appeals from their pages as directly to us to-day as when He first superseded the Divine Law of Moses, or commanded grown men to leave all and follow Him or rebuked devils and forgave sins. No criticism has shaken, or can shake, the apartness and reserve which always separates the Lord from His Disciples, even when He is closest to them in daily companionship on the road, or in prayer. Even His Mother had to await his "hour." And this consistent ascendancy in His behaviour is what stultifies the attempt to wring from two or three isolated sayings minimizing or equalitarian doctrines such as may commend Him to man's pride. Christ speaks to His disciples as potentially sons of God, and reveals God to them as their Father; but He never suggests to them that their sonship is what His is, or that they approach the Father otherwise than through Him.<sup>1</sup>

And, finally, no criticism has shaken or can shake the evidence of the Passion narratives. The strangest fact about the Gospels as literary and historical documents is one that is often forgotten—namely, the immensely disproportionate space, according to modern canons, which the Gospels give to the record of the Passion and Resurrection. The story of Jesus from the entry into Jerusalem to the end is given by every Evangelist alike, although their sources of information were considerably different, a predominant importance. In St. Luke, where this predominance is the least marked, so far as space is concerned, twenty-five per cent. of the whole number of verses are assigned to this theme. But in St. Matthew the percentage is thirty-six, in St. Mark thirty-seven, and in St.

<sup>1</sup> See for a good criticism of the equalitarian idea Mr. A. C. Champneys, *A Different Gospel*, pp. 10-16. I have developed the note of "apartness" in our Lord's teaching and bearing in *The Teaching of Christ*, ch. v. esp. pp. 130 ff.

John nearly thirty-eight<sup>1</sup>. No more telling testimony could be found to what was uppermost in the writers' minds. Moreover, the testimony is one that is only strengthened by the results of criticism. For, by common consent, we are without the closing verses of St. Mark's Gospel, which would increase the proportion there devoted to this period; and if, as many scholars believe, the source known as Q contained a Passion narrative, the proportion would almost certainly be equally great there too; while the reconstruction of Proto-Luke by Canon Streeter<sup>2</sup> means that in the first edition of St. Luke's Gospel also the familiar emphasis was equally clear. The only possible inference from these facts is that in the minds of all the earliest historians of Christ the last week of His earthly life, together with His Death, and Resurrection, contained the kernel and secret of all that He was and is.

And in point of fact we find all the elements we know of the teaching and outlook of Jesus heightened in these last days and fused one with another into an intense and wonderful unity. Here His sympathy and observant notice of little things and care for detail shines out through the tragedy, as when He blesses the widow's farthing or looks upon Peter or pardons the penitent thief. Here, too, He confirms by His own example before Pilate or in Gethsemane the teaching so lately given to His disciples about meekness and self-effacement, about vigilance and prayer. If we may trust St. Matthew's Gospel, six or seven of His parables belong to these few days. Every Messianic claim that He had made or seemed to make is reiterated and reinforced; every warning to the impenitent Jewish leaders is gathered up into the sustained denunciation at Jerusalem; every

<sup>1</sup> The actual figures are :

	St. Matthew.	St. Mark.	St. Luke.	St. John.
Total No. of verses ...	1,071	678	1,151	879
No. of verses from the entry into Jerusalem onwards ...	389	253	286	332

<sup>2</sup> *The Four Gospels*, Part II, ch. viii. I should like to express here the profound gratitude which I think theology owes to Canon Streeter for this work.

mark of love and tenderness towards "His own that were in the world" is underlined in that Supper where He symbolized the Love that was to be "to the end." Above all, the two conceptions which He used to express the universal relations of His Majesty and His Meekness—the conception of the Son of Man coming in the glory of His kingdom, and the conception of Messiah's Death and Resurrection—reach here the climax of their development.

It is not my purpose here to go into the vexed theological problems surrounding these two conceptions. The question whether our Lord Himself linked His Death and Resurrection with the prophecy in Isaiah liii. and so gave to that chapter a Messianic reference not given before is not perhaps a fundamental one; though an affirmative answer provides the simplest explanation of the fact that the Early Church undoubtedly did so. What *is* unquestionable is that the Passion and Death are wholly of a piece with the character of Jesus as we see it from the beginning; and that they are transfigured for Him, through the way in which He bears them and the direction He gives them, into glory. That essential doctrine of the Johannine Christ is equally implied in the repeated predictions of Death and Resurrection recorded by the Synoptists. As Baron von Hügel says: "Suffering, that very suffering, to escape which, as most real and harmful, or to explain which away, as but the false imagination of men, all the world before Christianity is seen hopelessly fleeing or as hopelessly ignoring: this same suffering is here both foreshown and suffered through by the Revealer Himself. And in this concrete case the suffering is a very world of the most diverse malignity, humiliation, dereliction, anguish bodily and mental; and the Sufferer here never ceases to maintain, about all this and about every other sacrifice and suffering throughout the world, both that the pain and the trial and the wicked dispositions which may inflict it or which may be roused by it are most real, most evil, *and* yet that it all, if taken in simple self-abandonment to God, is profoundly operative towards the soul's establishment in an otherwise uncapturable regal beatitude and peace. Without the Cross Jesus

could not ask as much of us, His followers, as He actually does ; without the Crown, He would but teach an heroic stoicism.”<sup>1</sup>

More intricate is the problem, or rather the network of problems, surrounding our Lord’s eschatological teaching. It is still unsolved, and perhaps can never be fully solved. But I think one may lay down certain positions as not likely to be abandoned. That Jesus spoke of a sudden and imminent Event, portending partially, if not fully, His own vindication and the establishment of His supernatural Kingdom, seems to be required to account not only for much that is most central in the Gospels but for the undoubted expectation which filled the minds of the first Christians after Pentecost. The Synoptic evidence seems also to show beyond cavil that in the last days at Jerusalem Jesus foretold the overthrow of the Temple, though the close connexion of this catastrophe with that other, more cosmic, Event may well be due to Christian tradition rather than to Himself. Moreover, the evidence is quite concordant that He asserted before Pilate the approaching disclosure of His own transcendent Nature and Destiny.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, the whole of these predictions are clothed in the imagery and thought-forms which alone were available to Jesus as a Jew of that particular day. I say “alone available” because any speculation we might indulge in as to the possible methods of self-expression at the command of the Incarnate Son is foreclosed by the practical necessity that He should be as intelligible as possible to the men of His own time ; the inward as well as the outward limits of His Mission required that He should think in their language, since the alternative would have been no other than a “speaking with tongues.”

So much I think we may take as agreed ; it is when we come to interpretation that divergences become most

<sup>1</sup> *Essays and Addresses, etc.*, pp. 129, 130.

<sup>2</sup> I have dealt with many aspects of the problem in my book already alluded to. But I now think I overstated the case on the eschatological side and underrated other elements—the “immanent” elements, if one may call them so—in our Lord’s teaching ; and that I sought a solution of the problem along rather too literal lines.

manifest. On the one side the thorough eschatological school insists that the apocalyptic element in Jesus was not only fundamental and central, but also that it was to Him literal and prosaic truth. On the other side Liberal Protestantism, shocked at the desiccation of Christ's Figure involved in such a portrayal of Him, contents itself with paying lip-service to His apocalyptic teaching as something which the evidence does not allow us to dispense with, but which was, in fact, unimportant. Both these lines of thought are one-sided. The mistake seems to be twofold. In the first place, the central element in Christ's Ministry is not the apocalyptic element taken by itself, but the fusion of that element with His experience and teaching of Suffering and Death. Secondly, there seems no reason why we should ascribe to Jesus in His eschatological sayings a literalism which we disown both for Him and for ourselves in the interpretation of other parts of His teaching. If His experience of the potentialities of being and suffering were uniquely profound—if the paradox of Majesty and Meekness was in Him supremely represented—then we should expect that its expression would be paradoxical and hard to decipher; while those who heard Him speak would very easily confuse His actual sayings in the reporting.

A complete interpretation of Christ's apocalyptic teaching may rightly be regarded as impossible. He Himself said that He did not "know" about that day and that hour. What He says of it is therefore fragmentary and obscure. But that the future promised, and promised soon, a fuller revelation of Him and of His Kingdom—of this He did speak plainly. And we are bound to seek for clues to what He meant by that prediction and to the sense in which it was fulfilled.

One of the modern writers who has seriously set himself to expound the religious, as distinct from the literary, significance of Our Lord's apocalyptic is Baron von Hügel; and I will venture to make one of his suggestions my starting-point. He premises that the element of "suddenness" so characteristic of the teaching of Jesus about the coming of the Kingdom is habitually found in Semitic thought as an

attribute of the Divine action. He instances the six days of Creation in Genesis. And he urges that this "suddenness" is at bottom caused by, and the symbol of, "the need to express a junction between the Simultaneity of God and the Successiveness . . . of man." No Jew—least of all Jesus—meant by using this category to imply anything changeable or capricious in the Nature of God; but it was essential to emphasize that the climax of all historical experience was to be something that was all Grace, Gift, God.

I believe that we have here a suggestion of profound helpfulness towards a fuller understanding of the Incarnation. Is not that "junction between Simultaneity and Successiveness" precisely the key—the necessary key—to a true conception of the experience of God Incarnate? Only, when transferred to human experience, we must speak of conflict rather than of junction. We are bound to think of God, the Eternal mind, as experiencing things—or what we call "things"—*all at once*; and, as Baron von Hügel points out, one of the marks of the mystical consciousness is to approximate to this simultaneity in experience.<sup>1</sup> But, equally, man, who grows, expands, develops, experiences things in succession; assimilates and integrates them with his personality, one by one; and remembers the times at which this or that was added to his inward store of riches. Moreover, as the mystical life abundantly testifies, these two dynamics of experience are locked in an agony of conflict. In Christ, in whom "dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily," this fusion and conflict must have been the central fibre of His Being.

Such an apprehension of the Incarnation seems to be closely in harmony with the utterances of Christian dogma. It enables us to ascribe reality both to His Godhead and to His Manhood, because it claims that He experienced things to the full in the two modes which are characteristic of God and of Man respectively—simultaneously and successively. And the conflict between these two modes of

<sup>1</sup> So also of the musical, which is closely allied to it. Dr. William Brown cites the case of Mozart hearing all the notes of one of his compositions *Zusammen*. (*Hibbert Journal*, April, 1925, p. 414.)

experience was the supreme condition of His Incarnate Life. Further, the conception gives a new meaning and vitality to the impassive Byzantine features of the dogma of the Two Wills. No patristic idea seems further from our modern ways of thinking than this ; and yet it guards something precious. And if to-day we speak of mental conflict as the necessary condition of the Incarnate Life of God made man, we may claim to have translated into modern speech all that was essential there.

But more important for our present purpose is the light which this conception throws upon our documentary evidence. It enables us to give a meaning to precisely those difficult, yet strongly marked, elements in our Lord's utterances which so many students abandon in despair. We may note three especially.

(1) It is characteristic of our Lord's apocalyptic that He conceives of the climax of things coming not only suddenly, but all at once. Judgment, the general Resurrection, His own vindication, His own full revelation in glory, the End of the World, the establishment of His Kingdom, the Regeneration—all these things seem to be regarded as part of one new order which is to supervene in human experience. If we regard these things as literal predictions, they can but baffle us ; and we are unable to decide which is the least credible—that Jesus should have been so mistaken, or that our documents should so utterly mislead us. But suppose that these utterances spring really from a Mind which did in fact experience these things all at once, and apprehended the whole of history with that simultaneity which belongs to God alone. Then the case is profoundly altered. We shall regard these utterances as so many glimpses of the whole of things, testifying more clearly than anything else in our Lord's teaching to the Divine Nature of His consciousness. And if such glimpses were in fact only glimpses caught in the midst of mental conflict, we may well understand His disclaimer of knowledge about "that day or that hour."

(2) The element of suddenness remains, and I do not think we can improve upon Baron von Hügel's explanation.

Just as the "all-at-onceness" of the new order which our Lord predicts is proper to His Divinity, so the "suddenness" of its impact betokens that He was also Man and Jew. The irruption or illapse of the Divine is in human experience sudden. That does not mean that it is not prepared for by a process of —often unconscious—incubation ; but the dénouement is sudden. It is so in all new demands of conscience, in all new experience of grace, in all fresh intuitions of truth. That is how the successiveness proper to human consciousness adjusts itself to the impact of the Abiding and the Ultimate. We need not ask that our Lord as Man should be an exception to the rule. We need only ask that, for the understanding of what He taught, we should be able to point to some experience or experiences which seem to have the quality of fulfilment.

(3) The conception of our Lord's consciousness as predominantly determined by the conflict between Divine simultaneity and human successiveness in His experience indicates an explanation for the clearly authenticated fact that He spoke of—and the Evangelists thought of—His apocalyptic promises in close association with His Death and Resurrection. For in fact there is only one solution to that conflict : it is through death. Death alone sets the seal on the subjugation of the Successive by the Simultaneous, and closes man's experience of Time. That is why it was a natural transition of thought when our Lord made rejoinder to St. Peter's confession of the Christhood by announcing the necessity of the Son of Man's death, and again passed quickly on to the thought of the establishment of His Kingdom in power (S. Mark, viii. 27, ix. 1). As Son of Man He "must suffer" to end the conflict which lay at the core of His Person : only so could the Human in Him be raised to the level of the Divine.

That, again, is why the apocalyptic hope and the presage of Death are blended with such mysterious urgency in the closing weeks and days of His Ministry. The necessity of the Death was an inner spiritual necessity—the necessity of making a unity of His experience ; and because that experience embraced the Whole of Things, the death which

unified it must have a cosmic and universal significance. No human death has this significance, because no human experience has this infinite range or contains so stark a conflict between the non-Successive and the Successive : if human death ever seems to take on such a meaning, it is when Divine grace has lent to human experience—as in the case of martyrs—the grace to taste a little of what Christ's conflict was. But equally Christ's experience on earth requires the death as something more than an accident or condition of being human ; it is not *a* Death, but *the* Death that He dies—Death at its highest and fullest of function and meaning, as the decisive factor terminating conflict.

(4) Yet, had that been all, we should never have known that the solution of the conflict was a victorious and a redemptive one. If even the Resurrection had been all, though we might have guessed that the solution was victorious, so far as concerned Jesus Himself, we should still doubt whether this victory were not a Pyrrhic one. We could not tell that it was redemptive for all mankind, with the legitimate hope that it was for the whole creation too. As the Gospel-story proceeds, the rich and manifold elements of the Kingdom of Heaven, which dominate the earlier narrative, are more and more drawn up and absorbed into the experience of the Divine Person Himself ; but it is in order that they may pass into the experience of the world. His victory is to be our victory—a universal victory. And it is here that the Ascension and Pentecost and the experience of St. Stephen come to meet the logic of Christ's own life and teaching. His Ascension is the symbolic manifestation of the fact that the last cerements of Successiveness are stripped away from His experience. He had passed through history to be history's Lord. And there follows the overpowering onrush of the Spirit—a mighty experience of the elemental powers of “the world to come,” a foretaste of that Kingdom which Christ came to establish.

Thus the Resurrection, and the experience of the Spirit which is the main-spring of the life of the Church, are the fulfilment on the time-plane of

our Lord's prediction of the Kingdom. Thereby believers have passed through the Judgment from Death to Life eternal. For them the Kingdom is a reality ; it is righteousness and joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. And the centre of it is the Person of the Son of Man, revealed in experience as the supernatural Son of God. In the power of the Spirit, men saw Him enthroned at God's right hand, and in that recognition enthroned Him in their own hearts. That process concerns the ultimate issues of every individual life as of human society in the bulk. The transvaluation of values which it effects is no transient episode of creaturely mortality, but has reference to the whole constitution of things, and is the point of bifurcation of the roads that lead to Heaven and to Hell. Of Christ so revealed in experience it may be said with even greater truth than Wordsworth said it of Duty :

Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong,  
And the most ancient heavens, through Thee, are fresh and  
strong.

" And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth." No other or less generous confession seems to suffice for the facts, alike of history and of experience. St. Stephen would not have used quite that rounded sentence; but it is St. Stephen's faith. St. Paul, a Rabbi to the end, never reached the full humanism of the phrase, but he would have rejoiced to assent to it. St. Peter and St. Mark and the Synoptics generally never moved so far as this from the straiter traditional categories of Judaistic theology ; but it is a just corollary of all that they say and write. We are apt to be far too exacting in our demands upon the Evangelical records. Not only can such a truth as that of the Incarnation be only " spiritually discerned " but the forms in which it manifests itself can hardly be simple or obvious. That is the great justification of the Higher Criticism. Since the great Patristic age there has hardly been any example of such sustained concentration upon the Person of Christ as

the critical movement has afforded. Just as in the fourth century the heresies no less than the orthodoxies bear witness to an intense devotion to our Lord, so even the least tenable of critical hypotheses is only explicable as the fruit, mediate or immediate, of a similar motive. And there have been few contributions of Criticism that have not added something to men's knowledge of the Master. If the Incarnation be true, every detail of the Divine Humanity matters. Only let us beware of thinking that what is simply and normally human can do the whole work of mediating the Divine. We must expect to find in the Incarnate Life every phase of spiritual conflict, tension, ecstasy, dejection, upward and outward reach, that is known to us in the lives of His followers. Our Lord's attitude to suffering and His apocalyptic hope seem to evidence just such varied and profound experience. The one exhibits suffering and sacrifice as what we can in our best moments discern it to be—the form which Love wears in the midst of evil. The other sets forth what, as the experience of martyrs and mystics teaches us, is no less surely a necessary condition of Incarnation—the combination, in and through conflict, of God's simultaneity with man's successiveness and growth. We cannot complain if in the Synoptic Gospels the simple and the difficult parts of the evidence lie side by side. Both parts are only fragmentary, and need to be supplemented by that "Christ of Faith" who is the central reality of the Catholic Church from the days of St. Stephen onwards. It is because this integration is effected in the pages of the Fourth Gospel that we are justified in regarding that as the truest and fullest of all our evidences to the Life of the Historic Christ.

## CHAPTER V

### THE ATONEMENT

But must Thy bed, Lord, be a borow'd grave  
Who lendst to all things all the life they have ?  
O rather use this heart, thus farr a fitter stone,  
'Cause, though a hard and cold one, yet it is Thine owne.

RICHARD CRASHAW.

#### I—*The Meaning of Salvation*

THERE have been many definitions of what Christians mean by salvation ; but none is simpler, nor yet more profound, than that implied in the contrast which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews draws between "dead works" and the service of the living God. He is arguing *à fortiori* from the ritual efficacy, within their own sphere, of the Jewish purifications to the real efficacy of the cleansing wrought by Christ, and says : "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh ; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God ?" (Hebrews ix. 13, 14). The phrase "dead works" is peculiar to this author in the New Testament, and seems to be struck from the anvil of experience. They are characteristic of a type or order of human life which Christians have known and left behind when they learnt to serve the living God. They include what St. Paul called "the works of the Law," but they are more than they ; for their reference is to no particular historical moral code, but to all acts, whether of thought or deed, which proceed from a certain kind of character and motive.

This motive may be defined both negatively and positively. Negatively it is a motive which ignores God. "Dead

works" are works done apart from, and without reference to Him. This reference need not be direct nor conscious in the case of every act. The schoolmen used to distinguish three degrees of reference, according to which an act might be referred to God, *virtualiter*, *habitualiter*, or *actualiter*<sup>1</sup>—a distinction which Jeremy Taylor refines still further<sup>2</sup>; the upshot being that any act may be regarded as referred to God which is part of a general purpose or process so referred. But "dead works" are outside any such purpose or process. The motive behind them runs up at no time to transcendent issues, and has no light or shadow playing upon it from the whole of things. They are thus essentially the works proper to what St. John calls "the world"—society, that is, as organized apart from God. They have the mechanical and conventional quality about them which distinguishes worldliness. They are done without vision, and for that reason are "dead"; for "where there is no vision, the people perisheth" (Prov. xxix. 18).

The positive basis of the type of character or spiritual condition from which these works proceed may be defined as selfishness. Self is the residuary legatee of all neglect of, or indifference to, God; if He is not to be the centre of life and purpose, the Ego will be. "Dead works" are such as lead nowhere except back to oneself, and are done throughout within the Self's orbit. So far as "the world" can be said to have an underlying spiritual unity, it is in that tacit compromise which experience has shown to be necessary if selfishness is not immediately to stultify itself. George Meredith has depicted this motive in classical colours in *The Egoist*. It was this self-enclosed quality which made Bunyan's conscience recoil from many of the harmless pursuits in which his village companions indulged. He was mistaken, no doubt, as a result of his Puritan upbringing, in supposing that such acts could not be redeemed by being done to God's glory;

<sup>1</sup> e.g., *Scotus, in II Sent. Dist.*, 41. The first two modes of reference are treated by Jeremy Taylor as one.

<sup>2</sup> *Ductor Dubitantium*, Book IV. ii. 6. "The third is a glorifying of God *interpretative*, by equivalence and interpretation; and this fourth does it *consecutive*, by way of consequence and acceptation."

but, as the issue presented itself to him, he could not regard them as other than sin; for they were inextricably associated in his mind with that reference of life to Self against which his soul was beginning to revolt.

"Dead works" therefore include all sinful works—both those which are formally wrong as being done in disobedience to ethical law and also those which are wrong because they proceed from a will which is unrelated to its true end in God. This is not to make sin something more than a transgression of the Decalogue: it is to give the Ten Commandments their full and proper weight and significance as applying to the motive and the heart no less than to the deed, and to insist that the "First Table" is of even greater import—as Christ taught—than the Second. "Dead works" are all works done in oblivion of what Christ called "the first and great commandment." They are proper to life on the purely natural level: they are characteristic of what we call secularism. And they are compatible with a strict keeping of the last six commandments of the Decalogue, as understood in the old Dispensation. What Jesus did was to recover and enhance the original radiance and power of the First Table of the Decalogue, and to reinterpret in the light of it the Second. And He was uncompromising in His insistence upon the transvaluation so effected. When one was drawn to Him whom He could not help loving, He had to refuse his service, because he could not face the cost involved in conversion to the living God (Mark x. 22).

The contrasted condition, which the writer to the Hebrews sets forth as the specific gift of Christianity, is that of a devoted and (in the literal sense) *worship-ful* life.<sup>1</sup> In this life the dominant motive determining character is the desire to give God His due; and that is the meaning of worship. The Self is subordinated here to the pursuit of an end in a realm of ends transcending the natural order. This realm and the whole community of those whose souls are dominated by it is what our Lord called the Kingdom of Heaven or of God; and the motive and spirit of worship,

<sup>1</sup> cf. Dr. Souter, *Pocket Lexicon*, sub voc. "λατρεύω, I serve, especially God, perhaps simply I worship." See also Grimm-Thayer in loc.

conceived in its widest sense as embracing the whole sphere of everyday thought and action, is what the New Testament writers and Jesus Himself meant by "righteousness." So our Lord bade His disciples "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"; and St. Paul says, "The Kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." The conception is of a moral life deriving from, and determined by, fellowship with God. Christians are thus to be in the world, but not of it; in the world because they are to live the fullest and richest possible life; not of it, because at every moment they are servants of an Invisible King and it is to Him that in one degree or another all their works stand referred. If Christ promised the immediate advent of a time when men should adore (*προσκυνεῖν*) the Father in spirit and truth (John iv. 23), it was because He came to create the conditions in which all life should become a service (*λατρεία*) to the living God. It is in the existence and use of those conditions that we shall find the fundamental ground of distinction between Christianity and secularism.

It is important to grasp this conception of worship as the foundation of the practical moral life, for it accounts for many facts in the life of the Church which appear paradoxical even to sympathetic observers and enquirers. Three points in particular may be mentioned. (1) The element of joyousness in the Christian ethic is founded in the conviction that all duty runs up into the privilege and opportunity of an exalted service. The form of the duty may be humble, and its proximate causes such as we should prefer to see changed; or again it may be positively painful, morally or physically, in itself; but when it is embraced as something due not to circumstances nor fortune, nor only indeed to the society of which we form part, but to the Creator and Lord of all—when, that is to say, what is humdrum as well as what is heroic is transformed into an act of worship—then it acquires from this new setting an irradiation which makes the duty a joy to perform. Aquinas presented an extreme instance of this operation of the Christian motive when he made provision for the case of

sickness being desired as an opportunity of serving God.<sup>1</sup> Few to-day would regard such a desire as healthy ; but at least there are few Christian souls who have not found the recompense of joy that attends the pursuit of the hard and simple life, where good things are renounced for the sake of better and the more difficult alternatives chosen to the greater glory of God. "The statutes of the Lord are right," said the Psalmist, "and rejoice the heart." That is why we find *sancta hilaritas* so prominent a feature in the character of those who have most markedly taken up a cross and followed Jesus.

(2) The idea of the moral life as consisting essentially in the worship of God explains also the stedfast refusal of Christian thought to be content with any purely ethical standards of value. Matthew Arnold's celebrated definition of religion as "morality tinged with emotion" fails just here : it omits the reference of conduct and emotion to final cause, which is what makes either properly religious. The primary interest of the Church as the moral educator of mankind is the fostering of the spiritual and worshipful motive. A modern writer<sup>2</sup> has spoken somewhat satirically of the Church as suspicious of "any currency that does not bear the stamp of its own mint." There is a truth in this ; and there is a reason for it. The reason is that the promotion of conduct conformable to Christian standards yet uninspired by the motive which alone exalts that conduct to the level of worship may slip very easily and by insensible stages into the cultivation of the second-best as though it were the best. The result would be that Christian conduct itself might become a kind of "dead works." This is what St. Paul has in mind when he says : "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Cor. xiii. 4). This, too, is what is meant when it is said that religion claims the whole of life. That claim is sometimes interpreted as though it meant that we should spend all our time in church ; and the rejection of the claim often

<sup>1</sup> *Summa* II. ii.

<sup>2</sup> The Dean of St. Paul's. *Outspoken Essays*, Series II.

expresses itself in the belief that the obligations of worship are fully satisfied by attendance at church on Sundays. The truth lies far deeper down. Religion does claim the whole of life, not because it claims the whole of our time, but because it claims the whole of our motive ; and the task of unifying the hierarchy of motives which determine our character under that single sovereignty of God is the work *par excellence* of Christian perseverance.

(3) At the same time it would be idle to deny that the Church does attach, and always has attached, great importance to what are in the more ordinary sense "acts of worship." These acts are not only the expression of that inner condition of soul which we have been considering ; they are also indispensable to its maintenance and development. "Begin by taking holy water," said Pascal, "and you will end by becoming a believer." What he meant was that acts of devotion tend to induce the frame of mind appropriate to them. Educational method and common sense alike agree with Pascal here in the belief that the mind appropriates truth by expressing it. A life without private prayer, a society without public worship, are for that reason alien to the Christian ethical ideal. Human nature is so constituted that, unless we express our duty to God and claim our fellowship with Him, we shall in fact forget it. And in this regard public worship is no less important than private prayer. Those who contend that religion is a matter for the individual and God alone forget that their life is bound up at every point with that of a society which is equally with themselves the object of His solicitude ; and the "righteousness" which He requires is due from us, not as units only, but as members of a regenerate mankind. The Catholic canon requiring Christians to attend Mass every Sunday embodies a principle which applies to all who wish to live by the Christian ethic, viz., the necessity of outward and social acts of re-consecration in motive and in conduct to the service of the living God.

This life of worship—of obedience enriched by fellowship with God—is the Kingdom of Heaven and eternal life. Salvation is the transference from that self-centred and self-

determined life issuing in "dead works" to this God-centred and God-determined life where "freedom is perfect service." To be in a state of salvation is to enjoy that communion with God which exalts us, in and through our obedience, from being servants to being sons, and entitles us to be called "the Children of the Highest." And this salvation, already partially possessed, points forward to a finality—for the individual in the perfect fulfilment of that part and place in the spiritual community for which he was created, for the race in the summation of all mankind under the sovereignty of Christ, its true Representative and Head.

The Christian doctrine of salvation thus involves a radical contrast between two kinds or orders of life—the natural and the spiritual or supernatural—and proclaims a change of status from the one to the other. This contrast and change run through the whole of the New Testament. The contrast indeed permeates the Old Testament as well, for it is the ultimate significance of that fissure between Israelites and Gentiles which is the clue to the older dispensation. In the New Testament the contrast is broadened and deepened into that between Nature and Supernature, between the things of this world and the things of the Kingdom of Heaven; and this development is accompanied by the revelation of a way leading men into the spiritual order. The contrast is seen in macrocosm in the distinction St. Paul draws between "the kingdoms of the world" and "the Kingdom of Christ"; in the oppositions so prominent in the writings which bear St. John's name, between the Church and the World, Jerusalem and Babylon; in the sharp antithesis of Light and Darkness, Life and Death, which characterizes the teaching of Jesus Himself. And in the microcosm of the individual life the contrast reveals itself as that between the "natural" ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\iota\kappa\circ\nu$ ) and the "spiritual," between the righteousness of the Law and the righteousness of Grace which is by faith. On the lower of these two levels (as St. Paul found) there can be no atonement or reconciliation to God, for it is without that worship which is His due from man. Obedience there may be, but

not the obedience of faith which is conditioned by the Divine fellowship : that is of a different order.

The new life of salvation thus presents itself as a quickening and refining of Good. Its differentia is to be found not so much in conduct as in motive and end—in what our Lord called “the heart.” Salvation begins when the heart is supernaturally awakened, becomes sensitive to spiritual things, and pays heed to the solicitations of grace. Who are thus awakened, and whether all will eventually be so we do not know ; but at least the fact that some are so and others not seems an undeniable fact of experience. Such a fact would appear to be the permanent element of truth underlying the Calvinistic division of human kind into the lost and the saved. The Calvinistic divines stated this truth with a crudity and baldness which no longer appeal to men’s consciences ; and a milder and more spiritual exegesis of Scripture has blunted the certainty with which theologians then determined the ultimate fate of their fellow-men. But that there is a fundamental difference not merely between good and evil, but between good and good, in the spiritual condition of men ; that the second includes but transcends the first ; and that it is the second which is of primary significance for religion, because it is concerned with men’s relationship to the Eternal God Himself—these are propositions which appear to have overwhelming testimony in the general mind of the Christian Church. And the question which is of primary moment for men is how the change was and is effected from the secular life to the life of worship—how that Atonement was wrought which issues in the gift of communion with God.

## II.—*Christ’s Death a Satisfaction for Sin*

The line of approach to this question which will here be adopted is in part dictated by the foregoing argument. If we attempt to present the Atonement in the light of the life of worship which it has made possible, the testimony with which we must concern ourselves is that of the characteristic form of worship : for it is here, if anywhere—in the

communal acts by which the Christian society expresses and fertilizes, symbolizes and promotes, its life of worship—that we shall find the surest evidences to the fundamentals of its faith.<sup>1</sup> When certain ideas have persisted for centuries in the various Eucharistic liturgies of the Church, and when they have over and over again invited and received interpretations from theologians, we may be fairly sure that we are dealing with something which lies very close to men's experience of life. The fact that they are "conventional," so far from entitling them to be dismissed, entitles them rather to particular attention.

The three elements in the conception of the Atonement which stand out most clearly in the Church's liturgies are well summed up in our own prayer of Consecration, where Christ's death is spoken of as a "sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." The present section will be confined to the last of these terms. What it denotes is that Christ's sacrificial death is part of a *Theodicy*.

By a Theodicy I mean a system of thought or plan of action intended to exhibit the justice of God in His dealings with mankind. The powerful operation of this element in the consciousness of the Christian community is clear from the course of the Thanksgiving which in all liturgies, though with peculiar fulness in those of the Eastern churches, serves as introduction to the main action of the service. This Thanksgiving commonly opens with an enumeration of the attributes of God and a description of His heavenly glory; and there follows, either before or after the *Sanctus*, a recitation of His dealings with mankind. The creation of man in God's image was the culmination of His works of power, and the beginning of His works of mercy. He offered man His grace and all the blessings of His fellowship; and even though man turned his back on this offer by the Fall and so blurred the Divine image, God still did not forsake him utterly but continued to solicit him to return. Thus He gave him the Law, wrought miracles in

<sup>1</sup> It is significant that this large volume of evidence is wholly ignored in Dr. Rashdall's *Bampton Lectures*, which are otherwise so complete.

his behalf, and sent him the Prophets. Finally, when all these instruments of education and discipline were foiled by man's self-will, He sent His only-begotten Son in the flesh, to restore the lost image, to live and die for the remission of our sins, to pay our debts, to suffer punishment on our behalf, and to make atonement for us. The redeeming work of Christ, therefore, together with the Christian sacrifice which proclaims before God and man the propitiatory significance of His Death, is set forth as the ground of that worshipful life which is the end of the whole action. God's purpose of establishing His Kingdom, of endowing man with eternal life, of confirming him in obedience enriched by His own fellowship, is not frustrated by sin ; but it is not frustrated only because satisfaction has been made for the sins of the world.

This use of the term "satisfaction" and its cognates is a warning that we cannot dispense with the notion of penalty in the consideration of the problem of Atonement. The fact that punishment suggests to many minds something arbitrary, incalculable, or harsh is an index of how men have abused it, not of the thing in itself. In itself, punishment is the means by which a violated moral order takes the offender again into relation with itself. The ideal ruler in a society of moral beings does not so much punish as administer a penalty proportionate to the offence committed. His purpose is primarily and in the first instance to re-establish the threatened order and to assert the righteousness which, failing that assertion, will be impaired and dissolved by repeated violation. In that sense the penalty is retributive, and it can be justified merely as an act of self-protection ; though in that simple and primitive form it is the evidence, not of a strong, but of a weak government or ruler. The strong ruler, however, has a further purpose. He knows that the weakening of the moral order of which he is the guardian is to the detriment of all those for whom it exists and in whom it finds expression. He desires, therefore, to prevent offences in the future ; and the penalties that he imposes will be so framed as to deter such offences. Such deterrent penalties may be of the kind that appeal only to the

instinct of fear ; or they may be so balanced and developed as to awaken the positive sentiments of awe and reverence. It was the custom of the Romans to incorporate in their laws and treaties a clause called the *sanctio*,<sup>1</sup> containing the penalties to which the parties were liable in the case of transgression ; and the attachment of these penalties was as much a means of moral education as a deterrent of crime, so that the word *sacrosanct*—i.e., protected by the death penalty—came to be a synonym for “ inviolable.” The penalty has become, that is to say, more than retributive ; more than deterrent, or exemplary ; it has become educative.<sup>2</sup>

Yet even so the purpose of the ideal ruler is not fully achieved. In the measure in which he is alive to the possibilities of each individual in his commonwealth, he must desire that offenders themselves should come to resume their true place in it. In the act of punishment he has broken off those outward relationships of the offender which violated the moral order, and substituted for them a relationship of justice to the order itself. Further, he has strengthened by the exhibition of justice the inner reverence for the whole order felt by its other and law-abiding members. But his purpose is not complete until the offender himself comes to repentance. So long as the will and motive are untouched, the relationship of the guilty person to the moral order which has asserted its claim over him is an external one only. But a moral order, in proportion as its ideals are realized, must rest upon inward relationships, upon a concord of wills ; and the more perfect the commonwealth, the more it will aim, beyond and through punishment, at the restoration of this concord. The development of English criminal procedure has shown how this end has been increasingly borne in mind. The institution of special courts for children ; the revolution in the character of reformatory schools ; the principle that a man sentenced to death may not be executed if of unsound mind (even though he may have

<sup>1</sup> cf. Cicero, *Pro Balbo*, §33.

<sup>2</sup> cf. the quotation from Clement of Alexandria in Rashdall's *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*, p. 231, n. 1.

been sane at the time of the crime); the place reserved in the system for court missionaries and prison chaplains; even the solemn prayer with which the death-sentence itself concludes—these are all indications of the value which a civilized Christian community sets upon the conversion of the guilty to co-operation with the moral ends of society.

At the same time the culprit's repentance does not mean a remission of the penalty. Frequently the payment of the penalty precedes repentance and induces it: and where the repentance must come first or not at all, as in the case of capital punishment, the result is not to make the penitent beg to be reprieved, but to enable him to accept his penalty with courage and hope. The governing power, that is to say, requires the penalty as satisfaction, even though it forgive the criminal: without that satisfaction, indeed, it does not forgive, but condones.

Once more, while justice requires that guilt shall be punished, it does not always and necessarily require that the penalty shall be paid by the guilty. The earlier forms of punishment—the retributive and the deterrent—involve, no doubt, the infliction of pain or loss upon the culprit in person; but in the measure that the educative and redemptive ends of all penalty are emphasized, the possibilities of its representative or vicarious payment come to the fore. In the case of civil damages, for example, there is nothing to prevent the liability of the offender being met by a friend; and in some cases it is obviously suitable that they should be so. But in the case of criminal punishment, too, there is an analogy to this vicarious function. If the infliction of pain or loss be regarded as the "matter" of punishment, the severance of wrong relationships and the substitution of a relationship of justice as between the offender and the moral order may be regarded as its "form." But these two aspects of the "form" of punishment are not wholly on the same footing. So far as the severance of wrong relationships is concerned, the purpose of punishment can exhaust itself in the suffering of the wrong-doers, and they are bound to pay that part of the penalty. But the case is otherwise with

the relationship which is substituted. In the first place, as we have seen, the purpose of the governing power is not achieved until the guilty person has come to accept the new relationship with his will, and turned the external necessity into an inner righteousness. He may do that in simple reaction to the assertion of the claims of the moral order. But more often the process of conversion is more complex. He has pride to overcome, and shame. It is here that others share the penalty with him and can even bear it for him. Inevitably they share the penalty with him in so far as they have been bound to him by ties of affection or trust ; but they bear it for him too, in proportion as their own distress and pain are evinced in an ever larger volume of active sympathy and encouragement.<sup>1</sup> The disgrace of punishment may lead to a man being forsaken of his friends, in which case the penalty is more likely to be the occasion of remorse than of repentance. But let a man see that the disgrace has been felt to the full by those whom he loves, and that they regard it as just, and yet that nevertheless their love for him grows rather than diminishes—that they gather round him rather than scatter from him—and the conditions are such as to lead any but the irretrievable to repentance. For now the penalty becomes charged with a peculiar sweetness. From acknowledging justice with fear, he now comes to love it, because he sees that those in whom its exercise is reflected love him ; and through their vicarious suffering of this part of his penalty, his soul is cleansed and his conscience acquitted.

This analysis of the idea of satisfaction for sin has been necessary, if we were to show that it was one which the theology of the Atonement could not dispense with. We need not dispute Dr. Rashdall's criticism that Anselm's exposition of it was marred by "barbaric" notions of justice and by the fatal identification of "moral transgression with

<sup>1</sup> The closing years of St. Chantal's life afford a striking illustration of this. Thus she writes : "The condition of my own soul is so dreadful and so unhappy that, when spiritual darkness or temptation or honour is described to me, instantly I become a prey to it myself. God shows me how to give help and comfort, but I myself remain destitute." cf. *Sainte Chantal*, by E. K. Sanders.

personal affront."<sup>1</sup> But the idea itself is not so easily disposed of. When Dr. Rashdall writes that "the theory of Anselm has the merit of recognizing that God must act according to the highest ideas of justice, and of acknowledging that we have no right to pronounce just in God what would have seemed the highest injustice in men,"<sup>2</sup> he is emphasizing the very point which makes *some* doctrine of satisfaction for sin indispensable. Nowhere in his great book, so far as I can discover, does Dr. Rashdall really face the problem which sin involves for those who believe in God as the moral governour of the universe. Yet that is what Scripture, in the highest reaches of its development, means by monotheism: and it is in the light of that belief in God, as Lord as well as Father, that the Church has seen the issues of sin and of redemption.

Let us apply, then, our analogy from what we know of moral government, and of the place of punishment in it, in human society. Christian Revelation sets the creation before us as in God's design and end a spiritual and moral order, in which each element answers to His will. His fundamental purpose is the production and maintenance of that order. Sin has partially, but only partially, violated it. The "heavenly commonwealth" still exists, even though men and even angels<sup>3</sup> have transgressed its laws. It exists not only in that hierarchy of spiritual beings who have never fallen from their first estate or who, having fallen, have "washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb"; but also, though crossed and thwarted and obscured by other relationships, in mankind himself, in so far as men are still alive to the solicitations of grace and can hear the voice of conscience. Indeed, the first work of the moral consciousness is to testify to the existence of that perfect order and to its abiding and inviolable strength. Further, the maintenance and manifestation of that order are prior, in man's purpose as well as in God's, to the need of individual redemption; for it is only in so far as we believe in it and hold fast

<sup>1</sup> op. cit. p. 355. "Feudal" would perhaps be a truer term than "barbaric."

<sup>2</sup> ib. p. 356.

<sup>3</sup> The fall of angels is most powerfully expounded in William Law's *The Spirit of Prayer*.

to it, that we can either desire or hope to be redeemed. The motive that above all draws men to repent is the thought of home, with all the moral security the word denotes ; and we cannot begin our repentance until we have apprehended (however dimly) that secure and stable relationship as its end.

The constitution of the world being, therefore, a moral order, and its purpose the maintenance and realization of that order in the obedience of its several members, human analogy leads us to suppose that the transgression of its laws will entail punishment. It is not a question of imparting to myriads of descendants the sin of one. What the Fall signifies is that at some critical point or series of points in the evolution of mankind, the human race " took a wrong turn," and contracted relationships and loyalties which were off the true path of its development. Original sin<sup>1</sup> is the name given to the false loyalties so acquired and to the innate tendencies resulting from them. Further, it is wholly contrary to the teachings of natural science to suppose that the consequences of so fundamental a step in the evolutionary process can be annulled by any act of an individual. Nowhere indeed are the abiding consequences of action or happening so consistently taught as in the book of Nature. There we see how processes, once set in motion, work themselves out to cosmic dimensions ; and we cannot suppose that that act or series of acts, by which man chose to be a child of Nature rather than a son of God and preferred to satisfy his instincts of pride and curiosity rather than enter into the heavenly fellowship, is any exception to the rule. Those consequences are what constitute for theology man's punishment. They are the penalty established in the order of things ; no arbitrary act of God, but the operation of laws long established and tried in the government of the world, and known to their first transgressors by virtue of their likeness to God.

The inspired writers of Israel found these consequences particularly in three universal conditions of human life—

<sup>1</sup> I should like to express my debt to Preb. Bicknell's *The Christian Idea of Sin and Original Sin*, and to Dr. James Orr's *Sin as a Problem of To-day*.

in toil, sickness, and death. This doctrine should not be regarded as a final revelation of the truth, but as proportionate to the general context of religious ideas which prevailed at the time. It is difficult to believe, for instance, that Man could ever have been exempt from the mortality which appears to belong to all physical organisms. Nevertheless, this intuition, though partial, was true so far as it went, and its utterances have symbolic value. For toil and sickness represent human experiences which attach to man by virtue of his relation to nature, and yet are not the normal lot of the brute creation ; while death, though it comes to beast and man alike, is in his case surcharged with elements of pain and fear which animals are apparently spared.<sup>1</sup> What is true of all these experiences in man's case is that they are experiences of weakness, disharmony, loss—the very negation of that self-sufficiency the claim to which constituted his "first disobedience." Blazoning before his eyes the instability of those false loyalties contracted by the Fall, they are superbly adapted to the ends of punishment conceived as the annulling of wrong relationships and the assertion of the true. *On jette enfin de la terre sur la tête, et en voila pour jamais.*<sup>2</sup>

*Pour jamais?* If Nature have her perfect work, why not ? Nothing in Nature can suggest that the loss should not be final : opportunities once lost, in that realm, do not return. And for many centuries Hebrew religion passed only very imperfectly beyond that idea. A continuance of existence was discerned, but it was a continuance in Sheol, a shadow-existence like that in Homer's *Nekuia*, with all that makes life worth living lost. Yet the religious consciousness could not rest there. The satisfaction for sin required by ethical monotheism was gained at too great expense to the very purpose of that moral order which God governed. And so, gradually, as the necessity of Divine mediation and redemptive action emerges, belief in a Resurrection emerges with it. Sheol is not final : there will be a discrimination and a revival, a

<sup>1</sup> See the quotations from scientific writers in Dr. Harris's *Pro Fide*, pp. 216 ff. (3rd edition).

<sup>2</sup> Pascal, *Pensées*, 210.

new life for the just and a second death for sinners. Glimpses of heaven and hell are all that the Old Testament gives us ; but they are the symptoms of a new unveiling of reality, the opening up of Supernature as the end of Nature, the suggestion of eternal life as the key to the mysteries of life in time. Christianity came to crown this revelation, and to unite all its broken and scattered rays in one effulgent light.

First, it illuminated death. "The wages of sin is death"—Æschylus like St. Paul had said that. But "the sting of death is sin"—that was a new message. What stings is not so much death, as the fact that death is the execution of a sentence of mortality which is inexorably just. And that same justice demands that it shall be final. In the measure in which the soul awakes to the possibilities of eternal life, it becomes aware that it merits (unless the natural order be a fraud) the "bitter pains of eternal death." Those experiences that surround the departing soul—the dissolution of dear ties, the loneliness of the road, the branding of life with futility, the sense of purpose unfinished and hope foreclosed—those are the reality. *On mourra seul.*<sup>1</sup> They are the consequences of man's moral condition, of the wrong relationships which he was born into and which he has so often voluntarily endorsed. They are penal in that sense of the word punishment already defined. They contain the "matter" of punishment, in that they are experiences of loss and pain. They contain its "form" in that they mean the decisive severance of the loyalties of sin, and the substitution of a relationship of justice, of expiation, in their place.

And yet, if that be all, it is a maimed and imperfect justice that is established. It is maimed and imperfect, because it is not victorious ; the purpose of Creation as a moral order is thwarted if a mere continuance in limbo be the term of men's existence. It is maimed and imperfect, moreover, in that the further end of punishment, which is repentance, cannot be realized.

That is the point at which the mediation of Christ and His vicarious satisfaction for sin manifest themselves as the

<sup>1</sup> Pascal, *Pensées*, 211.

hinge of our whole Theodicy, as the act of God in which His just and merciful Love are supremely realized and made plain. The Gospel declared that He paid the penalty for us. That which according to the moral rationality of the universe (which is God's law) we merited, He "voluntarily suffered." On our behalf He endured not only the full human experience of death, but also all of loss that our experience of it portends. He "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell." The Church has never isolated Christ's Death from His Passion; has dwelt lovingly on every detail of His Agony before the Cross, and on His Burial after it; can never omit, even while it cannot fully interpret, His descent into the twilight-life of "Hades." Pascal has caught the meaning of it with inimitable insight in that inspired meditation entitled *Le Mystère de Jesus*.<sup>1</sup> All that death can mean of complete loneliness and failure and expiatory loss Jesus entered into and took into His own experience. One of His chosen disciples is a traitor; three sleep; all flee; one denies Him. The comfort of fellowship comes to Him for a moment from the penitence of a thief; until all hope is dashed and He feels Himself forsaken even of God. Then in that dark night of the soul He cries aloud, "It is finished." The cup of Man's punishment has been drunk, and all the extremity of his loss experienced. Be it so. In that place of "eternal death" He will do out the duty and fulfil the justice of God. Into those hands He commends His spirit.

And this was "for us men and for our salvation." He bore the penalty common to all, that all who accepted His work might be spared it. In the natural and moral order of things all must perish and fail of salvation: but He could pay the penalty of all—the One for the many—by virtue of the Incarnation. Perfect Man, He could enter into the whole sum of human experience: Perfect God, He could follow out those experiences to their final issues in the sphere of the invisible realities. Man could but "add one to one" in the tale of the great satisfaction for sin: Jesus could and

<sup>1</sup> Pascal, *Pensées*, 553.

did encounter it in His one life and death, and thus vindicate the righteousness of God's government.

But, though vindicated, it was not yet victorious. It has often been pointed out that the writers of the New Testament, and particularly St. Paul, rarely speak of Christ's Death without combining with it the thought of His Resurrection. He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification"<sup>1</sup>—that is the true balance of the doctrine of the Atonement. For Christ's Resurrection showed that death might be the gate of life. Penal for Him, it ceased to be penal for Man; its "sting" was gone. Defeated in His case, its finality for all men was shattered. Jesus, by His rising from the dead, "brought life and immortality to light"—life, because the way was open for the supernatural fellowship with God, through the annulling of "the ordinances that were against us"; immortality, because the law of death no less than the law of sin was transcended (Rom. viii. 2). Thus was Redemption purchased; and Man, only believing and penitent, can enter on the worshipful life in which His salvation consists.

Finally, this redemptive and revealing act of God in Christ has exercised, as was inevitable, a powerful reflex influence upon the attitude of believers towards those experiences of toil, sickness, and death which had been particularly identified with punishment for sin. They are still common to man's lot, but for Christians their significance is changed. It has often been pointed out how the pessimism of the ancient world, so pronounced in the Greek tragedians and in the Stoics, was gradually overcome by the hope and joy which derived from Christianity; and it is still the experience of the ever-growing Church—in India, in Africa, in the South Sea Islands—that the Gospel of Christ gives men "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Is. lxi. 3). If in Europe, the cradle of Christendom, we seem to-day to be baffled by our conditions, we yet know that the cause is not in the ultimate conditions of life itself, but in our misuse of life. For toil, which to the non-Christian seems to betoken either

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iv. 25.

vassalage or vanity, has become to the believer the fulfilment of a probation and the discharge of a trust. Sickness, instead of indicating the disfavour of heavenly or supernatural powers, has become the focus of love and sympathy and the opportunity of growth in the spirit—a divine visitation, but a visitation of potential blessing. And Death, so far from being the sentence of nullity on human striving, has become a bed of hope for God's people, its bereavements tempered by the expectation of re-union, its silence by the sound of the trumpets on the other side, its loneliness by the comfort of the *viaticum* and the Word of God.

To sum up. Christ's Death is a satisfaction for sin in that it represents His complete entrance on man's behalf into those experiences of mortality which are the consequences of man's sin. Those consequences present themselves as such as we should expect from the analogy of what we know of the processes of evolution ; and because the order of Nature in which they occur is a moral order and rests upon the Will of God, they are properly regarded as punishment or satisfaction for sin. In the government of human societies, the " matter " of punishment consists in pain or loss, and its " form " in the severance of wrong relationships and the substitution for them of a relationship of justice ; but the end of government is not fully attained until the guilty person comes to repentance, and thereby embraces his penalty as a means of expiation. Moreover room is left in civil procedure for the vicarious payment of the penalty, and in criminal cases for a participation by the innocent in the pain of punishment, which is often found to provide the strongest motive for the transgressor's repentance. In God's government of the world the Hebrew doctrine that toil, disease, and death were the penalty for sin prepared the way for those keener intuitions of the supernatural issues of life which characterized later Judaism and were finally developed in Christianity. On this background the experiences of mortality appeared as the premonition of a finality of loss which was inexorably just, and their penal sting was enhanced. What Christ did was to enter, by His Passion, Death, and Descent into Hell, into the reality of loss so adumbrated ;

to suffer it as Man for men, that we might not suffer it to whom it was justly due ; and by His Resurrection from the dead to break death's spell upon the soul, to show it as the gate of life for those who believed, and to open the way of repentance for all mankind. The ground of God's forgiveness was thus established and revealed, and the life of true worship, in which consists salvation, was restored to the world.

The purpose of this section is constructive rather than controversial ; none the less, its relation to the Abelardian view so ably urged by Dr. Rashdall may perhaps be noted in conclusion. When Dr. Rashdall says that repentance was

“ . . . the only condition of salvation while Christ was yet on earth ; and in the whole range of our Lord's other teaching there is not the shadow or shade of a suggestion that the offer of salvation made to man while He was yet on earth was to be withdrawn, or narrowed, or saddled with fresh conditions in consequence of, or subsequently to, His death . . . ”<sup>1</sup>

we need not dispute the statement.<sup>2</sup> Nor do we in the least obscure or extenuate the lesson of the parable of the Prodigal Son, with its emphasis upon repentance and its revelation of the Father's welcome to the penitent. But the whole of its lesson must be learnt. What moves the Prodigal to repentance is first the fact that he has drunk to the full the consequences of his rebellion, and next the haunting memory of a secure and stable home where dwelt justice and love. These features interpose no fresh “ condition ” of forgiveness, but they are wholly consistent with such a Theodicy as has been adumbrated above. It is not a question of the condition of forgiveness, but of its ground ; and when Jesus uttered the parable of the Prodigal Son, He had no need to emphasize that, seeing that it was none other than Himself. On the other hand, when simplified as Dr. Rashdall simplifies it, the doctrine of the Atonement becomes self-destructive, for it weakens the main motive for repentance. That motive

<sup>1</sup> op. cit. pp. 26, 27.

<sup>2</sup> Except in one particular, Our Lord does lay down one “ condition ” of God's forgiveness of us—i.e., our readiness to forgive others.

is the vision of One who is just as well as loving ; who governs the world in Righteousness even while He pardons the sinner ; who does not cease to be the Almighty Lord when He reveals Himself as Father. Moreover, only such a revelation can afford a motive, not only for repentance, but for the preaching of it. The message which the Apostles took into the Gentile world was not simply a message of Divine forgiveness ; for few felt any need of forgiveness. It was first of all a message about God—about His Holiness, His Kingdom, His purpose for man ; about sin and its satisfaction ; and only then about grace and eternal life. In other words, it was a Theodicy : and it was to those who accepted this Theodicy that they taught Christ's story of the Prodigal Son.

### III.—*Christ our Sacrifice and Oblation*

No idea is more familiar to us in connexion with Christ's Death than that of Sacrifice. It is scarcely too much to say that the New Testament is saturated in it. In the Synoptic Gospels we have the much-discussed "Ransom" passage (Mk. x. 45), and our Lord's emphatic words at the Last Supper, "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many" (Mk. xiv. 24 and parallels). In the Apocalypse "the Lamb" is alluded to no fewer than twenty-seven times. St. Paul speaks of Christ's "blood" as the ground of our justification (Rom. v. 9, cf. iii. 25) and redemption (Eph. i. 7), and of the universality of the reconciliation He has wrought (Eph. ii. 15, Col. i. 20) ; and says boldly, "Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. v. 7). St. Peter speaks of His "precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish," and of its sprinkling upon us (1 Pet. i. 19 ; i. 2). But above all St. John and the author of Hebrews draw out the full implicates of this thought. Of Hebrews Christ's Sacrifice is the main subject. As Dr. Orr says,<sup>1</sup> it is in the Levitical system that all the ideas of Old Testament sacrifice come to clearest expression ; and the purpose of this Epistle is to interpret that system as fulfilled in Christ. But we shall

<sup>1</sup> H. D. B., art. *Atonement*.

revert to this in detail in the sequel, and need not pause upon it now. The case of the Johannine Gospel and Epistles is different, but not less striking. For not only have we a number of overt allusions to the sacrificial character of Christ's Death (e.g., I John i. 7; ii. 1; John i. 29, 36), but in countless ways not noticeable at first sight the idea is woven into the texture of the narrative, so that the framework of the idea of Atonement, which in St. Paul's writings is so largely forensic, becomes in St. John predominantly sacrificial.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the first four chapters of the Gospel are steeped in the mystery of purification, exemplified at Cana and in the cleansing of the Temple.<sup>2</sup> This Evangelist's account of the Feeding of the Five Thousand is introduced by a note of time referring to the Passover (vi. 4), mentions that the loaves were of barley such as would have been suitable at the Feast, and issues in the great discourse upon Christ's Sacrifice as the Bread of Life. In recording the entry into Jerusalem, he alone observes that the branches strewed in the way were of palm—i.e., such as were carried round the altar at the Feast of Tabernacles. In telling of the Passion, St. John alone records the piercing of the Lord's side on the Cross, with the outflowing of water and blood, and notes how the omission to break His legs seemed to mark Him out as the Paschal victim itself (John xix. 31-37; cf. Ex. xii. 46). So firmly seized is he, indeed, of the sacrificial character of Jesus' Death that he parts company with long-standing tradition and makes it to synchronize with the very hour when the Passover sacrifices were slain. And finally we may observe how in all the evangelic records alike the story of the Passion contrasts with the rest of the narrative in fulness and richness of detail. The disproportionate space given to the Passion and Resurrection is such as could be justified on no ordinary grounds of history or biography.<sup>3</sup> It is only explicable if writers and readers alike were men who thought of Christ's Death as consummating in some unique way

<sup>1</sup> A forensic interpretation has been suggested for one important passage, John xvi. 8 f., where W. H. P. Hatch has urged that δικαιοσύνης = acquittal. (*Harvard Theol. Review*, Jan., 1921.)

<sup>2</sup> The point is fully worked out by E. C. Hoskyns in *Theology*, I. 83 ff.

<sup>3</sup> cf. *supra*, p. 128.

the purpose and meaning of His Life and constituting the ground of His, and their, appeal to the world, and of men's approach to God.

Moreover, we have not to deal with the New Testament only. On the one hand, sacrifice is a constant feature of the life and literature of the Hebrew people from the earliest days, and appears, indeed, with few exceptions, to be as widespread as religion itself. On the other, the idea persists, though purified and exalted by its application to Jesus, in the thought and practice of Christianity. When our Prayer Book refers to His Death as a "sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction" or speaks of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as "ordained . . . for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the Death of Christ," it is speaking the language both of the Fathers<sup>1</sup> and of the early Liturgies. The point, indeed, needs to be emphasized in view of many statements which are rife to-day; as, for example, that "the Holy Sacrament was instituted by Christ for no other purpose but that we should reverently and faithfully partake of the same,"<sup>2</sup> or that the Sacrifice offered in the Eucharist is primarily the sacrifice of ourselves.<sup>3</sup> Scripture and the Church alike teach otherwise. Both our Lord Himself at the institution, and St. Paul in interpreting Him, speak of its purpose as being "for a memorial"; while the fundamental sacrifice, in virtue of which alone that term can be applied to the Eucharist, is the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary.<sup>4</sup> Yet, after all, the point need not be laboured; for the popular belief of Christendom is too strong an evidence to be gainsaid. One, and one only, symbol has been used all down the ages by Christians, when they wish to commemorate the sacrifice of life: and that symbol is the Cross.

This unanimity as to the sacrificial character of Christ's

<sup>1</sup> See proposed rubric in *A New Prayer-Book*, Part II. p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> *Grey Book Pamphlet No. 4* seems here far more balanced than *G.B.P.* No. 2; and the present writer fully agrees that Cranmer was emphasizing a most important truth in placing the Prayer of Oblation where he did. Similarly, he would agree that the purpose of the Reserved Sacrament is Communion. But he cannot help feeling that, in striving to recover a just proportion of thought and practice, the *Grey Book* writers have straddled the mark of theological truth instead of hitting it.

<sup>3</sup> cf. Heb. xiii. 10.

Death might be supposed to simplify our task ; but, in fact, it only brings us to the threshold of the problem. Popular ideas are often those that take the hardest thinking, if they are to appear rational ; and they lend themselves easily to partial or premature interpretations. And the idea of Sacrifice, for all its frequency on men's lips, is one that consorts ill, when used in connexion with religion and worship, with much of the currency of modern thought. Most men, if asked to-day why the term sacrifice was applied to our Lord's Death, would reply that it was because His Death afforded the most sublime spectacle of self-sacrifice ever seen : and yet they would be giving the term precisely that one among its many connotations which is almost unknown to the New Testament. I do not mean that the New Testament does not bring out in sharp relief the self-sacrifice of Jesus : but when it does, it does not employ at all obviously the language of sacrifice. The truth is that, for Scripture and the Church alike, the idea of sacrifice is highly complex and, in a sense, technical. No royal road leads from what they mean by it to what men commonly mean by it to-day. Connexion there is ; but it is only by analysis and development of its components that we can trace it out. And the ideas to which some of those lines of analysis lead us, though full of significance to modern minds, do not clothe themselves, for us, in the language of sacrifice at all.

This fact, moreover, dictates in large measure the method to be adopted. We must examine the significance of sacrifice as presented to us in Holy Scripture, partially and often crudely in the Old Testament, fully and finally in the New ; and then endeavour to estimate the bearing of each element upon the life and thought of to-day. And three main threads which seem most plainly distinguishable in the evidence are (1) the idea of Purification ; (2) the idea of the Covenant ; (3) the idea of Fellowship. And at the outset we may observe that through all three elements of Sacrifice there runs an important common factor. Each of them involves something *to be assimilated by man*. Purification was wrought by His Death that we might " be pure, even as He is pure " ; He established the Covenant in His blood, but it was that we

might keep it : He gave His Life for us in Sacrifice, in order that we might partake of it. In the previous article, when we considered Christ's Death as a Satisfaction for sin, we were regarding it mainly as a fact outside of us, as the necessary and dogmatic ground of the Atonement. But, conceived as a Sacrifice, the fact is more plainly seen to involve for its completeness an activity on man's part as well. It must be appropriated. It is not a question of two facts, but of two complementary aspects of the same fact ; satisfaction representing the Godward aspect, sacrifice the Godward and manward both.

With this preface let us pass to the main divisions of our subject.

### (I)—PURIFICATION.

There are three purificatory sacrifices of the Levitical system which the writer of Hebrews refers to in his exposition of the Sacrifice of Christ. One is the purely ceremonial sacrifice of the Red Heifer (Num. xix, Heb. ix. 13 [xiii.11]), whose ashes, after it had been burnt outside the camp, were mixed with running water and applied to one who had been defiled by contact with a dead body. The others are the Sin-offering<sup>1</sup> and the ritual of the Day of Atonement.<sup>2</sup> Both these were expiatory sacrifices, with the idea of purification strongly emphasized ; but the former was so largely taken up into and expanded in the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement that we need here only concern ourselves with the latter. The ideas suggested by these rites occur frequently in Hebrews, and are often combined, in one passage or even in one verse, with ideas derived from other types of sacrifice —a fact, indeed, which throughout complicates the exegesis of this Epistle. But we can abstract each element for study. Thus Christ's passage through the heavens (iv. 14) or entry through the veil (vi. 20) recalls the high-priest's mysterious exits and entrances on the Day of Atonement,

<sup>1</sup> Lev. iv. 1, v. 13, vi. 24-30 ; ix. Ex. xxix. 4-14, Num. xv. 22-29. Heb. ix. 14, x. 12. Rom. iii. 25. (John i. 29 ; 1 John i. 7).

<sup>2</sup> Lev. xvi. xxiii. 26-32 ; Num. xxix. 7-11 ; Heb. x. xiii. 11, 12.

though indeed Jesus enters not to return (x. 12) save at the Last Day (ix. 28); our access to the Father is mediated, like that of the Jews, by Priest and Victim (x. 10-21); our Victim, like theirs, suffered death "outside the camp" (xiii. 11, 12). Finally, the purpose of Christ's sacrifice was to purify or make purification. That purpose was common both to the sacrifice of the Red Heifer and to the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement; and it had its analogue in the cleansing made by Christ.

Two objects are spoken of as cleansed by Christ's blood. We will take the most difficult first. The Day of Atonement witnessed the sprinkling of blood upon and before the Mercy Seat, around the Holy Place, and upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering; and Hebrews finds prefigured here the cleansing of "the heavenly things themselves" (ix. 23). How shall we interpret these "heavenly things"? The answer seems to be that they are that whole supernatural order or network of realities and relationships which has been dislocated by sin. The need of it finds utterance in St. Paul's summons to the warfare "against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. vi. 12, R.V.). But, if sin is of such range, so likewise is redemption. To those same "principalities and powers" is now made known through the Church, exalted to sit with Jesus (Eph. ii. 6), the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. iii. 10). Christ cleansing the heavenly things is Christ "preparing a place" for believers in His Father's house (John xiv. 2).

More commonly, however, in the New Testament it is believers who are cleansed.<sup>1</sup> The classical passage is the sentence from which this study of the Atonement took its departure. "For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through eternal spirit offered himself without

<sup>1</sup> Tit. ii. 14, Eph. iv. 26, 1 Peter i. 22, 2 Peter i. 9, 1 John i. 7, 9, Heb. i. 3, ix. 14, x. 2, 22.

spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God ? " (Heb. ix. 14). The effect of Christ's sacrifice is, in short, the purgation or cleansing of the conscience. It is contrasted with the Levitical sacrifices in that, in their case, the purgation was ineffective: men were still conscious of sin, and found in them no inward harmony or peace with God. The process is throughout spiritual and ethical rather than forensic. The " blood " of Christ is the sign manual of a will wholly and sinlessly surrendered to God (Heb. ix. 14, x. 10). It is ethical on man's side, further, in that it is dependent upon our faith,<sup>1</sup> fellowship, and contrition (1 Pet. i. 22; 1 John i. 7, 9). Its fruit is the hallowing of a peculiar people, " zealous of good works " (Tit. ii. 14). And it needs our conscious attention ; it may not be " forgotten " (2 Pet. i. 9). But throughout the New Testament the instrument of this purification is the Lord's consummated sacrifice and that alone. Can we define more clearly the manner of its operation, and so relate more closely its two terms—Christ's sacrifice and man's soul ?

In a celebrated passage of the *Poetics* Aristotle speaks of Tragedy fulfilling an ethical function which has so many points of contact with the one before us that we may well turn to it for light upon our problem :

Tragedy, he says, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude ; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play ; in the form of action, not of narrative ; through pity and fear effecting the proper *katharsis*, or purgation, of these emotions (*Poet.* vi. 2).<sup>2</sup>

There seems no doubt that the metaphor contained in this last phrase is medical, whereas that in Hebrews is ceremonial : *katharsis* is not simply *katharismos*. At the

<sup>1</sup> The late Dr. Whyte, of Free St. George's, Edinburgh, once startled a congregation by beginning a sermon on the text, " The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin," with the words : " There's no such text as this in the Bible—if you take it alone." cf. *Life of Alexander Whyte*, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> In commenting on the passage, I have followed the masterly treatment in Chapter VI of Butcher's *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*.

same time, when both metaphors are used to describe a psychological or pathological process and also contain in themselves the same fundamental idea of cleansing, it is obvious that the connexion between them can be pressed. *Katharismos*, in short, when it becomes ethical, must at least involve a moral *katharsis*.<sup>1</sup> In the ancient medical writers this latter term "denotes the removal of a painful or disturbing element from the organism, and hence the purifying of what remains, by the elimination of alien matter."<sup>2</sup> By Tragedy Aristotle says that the twin emotions of pity and fear are purged, each of them containing a painful or morbid element which in the excitation of the emotions themselves is discharged. If we ask what this morbid element is which is thus purged away, the answer would seem to be that it is the self-regarding element found in pity as well as in fear. In real life fear is as a rule, pity often, mainly self-regarding : but in the theatre the appeal is to the universal in these emotions : their excitation has no reference to the petty interests of self : they are disengaged from the individual and centred, by the onrush of active sympathy, in the tragic hero as the representative of man ; and so universalized they are cleansed.

I venture to urge that we have here an illuminating analogy with the cleansing power of the Cross. True, the *mise-en-scène* is grander and more profound. The universal is present, not by abstraction from real life, but because the central figure is in reality Divine. What is purged, moreover, is not the particular emotions with which Aristotle was concerned, but the whole complex system of the moral consciousness. But none the less the parallel remains. He whose sufferings and death are the stimulus of our conscience is, like Aristotle's tragic hero, "like unto us" (*Poet.* xiii. 2, *Heb.* ii. 17; iv. 15), though with the difference that He is without sin. Our moral consciousness, like the

<sup>1</sup> Butcher notes that *καθαίρειν* admits of a double construction : (a) with accus. of the thing purged away and removed, (b) with accus. of the thing cleansed. So we find *καθαρισμός*, *καθαρίζω* used (a) of the disease (*Matt.* viii. 3), or sins (*Heb.* i. 3, Westcott *in loc.*) removed (cf. the similar use of *ἱλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἀμαρτίας* in *Heb.* ii. 17) as well as (b) of the thing thus cleansed (e.g., *Heb.* ix. 14).

<sup>2</sup> Butcher, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

emotions of pity and fear, contains a morbid element, in that it is largely self-regarding and that its natural reaction to sin is remorse.<sup>1</sup> Left to itself, it issues in "dead works"; but the presentation of Christ's Death as a satisfaction for sin expands it to comprehend the universal issues of good and evil, and in this enlargement it is cleansed. At the same time, those sufferings are peculiarly such as to arouse the whole of man's sympathy, for they are not only inflicted but sought, a sacrifice as well as a satisfaction, the very embodiment of Love. "God commendeth His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). And in the awakening of love for God lies the soul's purification.

This is, of course, the purport and meaning of that great passage of Isaiah, which more than any prophecy, shaped and governed the thought of the Early Church upon the Passion and Death of Jesus. Yet we are so accustomed to dwell only upon the central figure in the scene that the psychological movement of the whole Song may easily escape us. It contains not one voice but three; first, the Divine announcement that suffering has redemptive value; secondly, the confession of God's people of their change from indifference and derision to compunction and sorrow as they contemplate the sufferer; and third, the prophet's own description, ratifying in God's Name what the intuitions of conscience have already taught, of the vicariousness of the Servant's suffering and of its vindication. For the expression of this truth the prophet avails himself of sacrificial metaphors; and it is reasonable to suppose that he has in mind, not merely the formal ritual of sacrifice, but also the religious emotions and experiences which at its best it evoked. They were the raw material of his image. Its "form" was derived from His realization of substitutive suffering as "a great living fact of human experience, whose outward features are not more evident to men's eyes than its inner meaning is appreciable by their conscience, and of irresistible effect upon their whole moral nature,"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> cf. Macdougall, *Social Psychology*, pp. 440, 158.

<sup>2</sup> G. A. Smith, *The Book of Isaiah*, II. 354.

and from his conviction that this truth must be embodied in human life. The result was to introduce into religion a conception for which up to that date language had no word, and which apart from the prophetic teaching could never have arisen from ancient ideas of sacrifice<sup>1</sup>—the conception of *self-sacrifice*. The importance of the Songs of the Servant in the development of the pre-Christian Jewish thought is that they moralize the idea of sacrifice by the introduction of this conception. The victim becomes a person, freely offering his life for others, entering of his own will and sympathy into their condition and its consequences, and taking upon himself the blame for their misdeeds. And it is that idea of sacrifice, thus moralized and made spiritual, which later dominated the mind of Christ<sup>2</sup> and His Apostles.

The Church has a name for this purgative effect of the Passion on the conscience ; it calls it Contrition. It is not the whole of repentance, just as purification does not exhaust the significance of Christ's sacrifice. But it is the first step. And it is essentially an emotional purgation. It is rightly likened to the "dew," for in it the heart's dry surface is moistened. The combative elements in the will, so prominent in remorse, are tuned into submission, and the Love of Christ, satisfying the righteousness of God on our behalf, awakens in him who becomes aware of it an answering love,

<sup>1</sup> cf. *Sacrifice*, by Canon Kennett, D.D., p. 32.

<sup>2</sup>In an earlier work, *The Teaching of Christ*, I discussed the question of our Lord's application to Himself of the rôle of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, and left the decision more doubtful than I should now be prepared to do. The ground of my doubt was that "it is not easy to explain why His references to Isaiah liii. are so rare and ill-attested, if He really made them." I should not now regard these references as "ill-attested"; while their rarity seems to me wholly in keeping with the reserve which marked Our Lord's teaching with regard to all matters whose meaning could only be clear after His Death and Resurrection. Indeed, we might say that the very rarity of these references adds to our sense of the historical veracity of the Gospel narratives; for the Early Church was profoundly imbued with the idea of the fulfilment of Isaiah liii. in the Passion of Our Lord.

Professor Burkitt points out that the Christian use of the prophecy appears to be confined in the N.T. to those writers who used the Greek O. T. It thus belongs to "a very early stage of Greek-speaking Christianity, but it is not quite primitive or apostolic." But does this follow ? For one of the Twelve at least, Philip, was almost certainly a Greek-speaker, and may well have been the medium through which this idea passed from the Lord into the Early Church. cf. *Christian Beginnings*, pp. 35 ff.

which induces sorrow for sin and the desire to amend. The moral consciousness, in its apprehension of the past, is purified.

In the economy of Redemption, the great instrument through which this purification through the Cross is effected is the preaching and teaching of the Church. "Faith comes by hearing; and hearing through the Word of Christ" (Rom. x. 17). So St. Paul: and St. Peter likewise, addresses his readers as those who have sanctified their souls "in obeying the Truth [through the Spirit]" (1 Peter i. 22). We make a great mistake if we suppose that the application of Christ's sacrifice is only sacramental. In the order of spiritual consciousness, preaching and teaching must come first. In the Church's youth, they always preceded Baptism, and even to-day, when infant baptism is the rule, the sacrament is administered only in response to the sponsors' confession of faith. To minimize that fact is to reduce Baptism to something very like magic. Likewise it is a true instinct (however it may be sometimes abused) which has led the Church to associate Confirmation with confession and absolution; for the individual's conscious appropriation of the benefits of baptism will issue first in contrition, and God's answer to contrition is pardon. But the foundation of the whole worship-ful life which the Church nourishes lies in the presentation to the growing moral consciousness of the child or learner of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross as the perfect expression of God's purifying and pardoning love; for in proportion as this kindles the spiritual imagination, the conscience is purged of its legality and self-centredness, and the moral character enters into its inheritance of spiritual freedom.

#### (2)—THE COVENANT.

No idea of sacrifice is more prominent in the passage of Hebrews from which we took our departure (ix. 14 ff.) than that of the Covenant. The life of fellowship with God or the worship-ful life is made possible, because our consciences, giving us our sense both of the ultimate justice

of things and of our own discord with it, have been cleansed by the blood of Christ, who offered Himself as the spotless victim. That is why Jesus mediates a new covenant, a new and established relation between God and man. His death has made atonement or satisfaction for sins and so "sets men free : the Covenant gave Him the support he required. The Death removed the burden of the past ; the Covenant provided for the service of the future."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, covenants themselves required sacrifice, with the death of a victim. That was the belief under the old dispensation (cf. Ps. l. 5.) and the writer to the Hebrews expressly endorses it (ix. 17). So, too, the first Epistle of St. Peter opens with an allusion to "the sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ" (i. 2), recalling the sprinkling of the people at the making of the Covenant on Sinai. And the thought receives the authority even of Jesus Himself when He says at the Last Supper : "This is My Blood of the New Covenant which is shed for many" (Mark xiv. 24). Westcott is thus summarizing the New Testament teaching when he writes : "The system, the Dispensation, established by Christ, corresponds in the truest sense to a New Covenant, and rests upon a Covenant. A Covenant indeed requires for absolute validity the ratification by death, as is conspicuously illustrated by the fundamental covenant sacrifice in Gen. xv. and by the Covenant with Israel."<sup>2</sup>

The two sacrifices here alluded to provide two of the most awe-inspiring scenes in Old Testament story ; but we must content ourselves here with considering their *rationale*. The clue is to be sought in the first of them, which has been the subject of much discussion. The main features of the sacrifice are the cutting in two of the animal victims, and the passage of the covenanting parties between the pieces so cut.<sup>3</sup> One view of this ritual is that it is a form of *sanctio*, the parties invoking upon themselves the fate of the victim if they should break their bond.<sup>4</sup> Robertson

<sup>1</sup> Westcott, on Heb. ix. 15.

<sup>2</sup> op. cit., addit. note on Heb. ix. 16, §10. The Mosaic Covenant-Sacrifice is described in Ex. xxiv. 3-8.

<sup>3</sup> In Gen. xv. 17 the Divine Presence is represented by "a smoking furnace and a flaming torch" : cf. Ex. iii. (the Burning Bush).

<sup>4</sup> So Driver on Jer. xxxiv. 18.

Smith, on the other hand, maintained that the idea was purificatory and sacramental, the parties being regarded as united by common relation to the same victim's blood. The two views are discussed, illustrated, and reconciled by Sir James Frazer.<sup>1</sup> After showing how the idea of sanction is borne out by parallel customs on the Niger river, among the Chins of Burmah, and in ancient Assyria and Greece, he agrees that there are features in the Hebraic rite which are not accounted for on this view; and he proceeds to urge that modern Arab analogies tell rather in favour of the sacramental explanation, though he would speak of its purpose as protective rather than purificatory. When peace is made, for instance, between enemies, "the invaders purify or protect themselves from the malign influence of their foes by implicitly entering into a blood covenant with them."<sup>2</sup> But Sir James is unwilling to regard the two views as finally exclusive of one another, and he concludes by saying that "the rite is composed of two distinct but correlated elements, namely, first, the cutting of the victim in two, and, secondly, the passing of the covenanters between the pieces. Of these two elements the first is to be explained by the retributive and the other by the sacramental theory. The two theories are complementary to each other, and together furnish a complete explanation of the rite."

This analysis is important because it throws light forward on to the more conventional type of Covenant-sacrifice in which the children of Israel took part after the giving of the Law (Ex. xxiv. 3-8). The bisection of the victims has become the "burnt-offerings" and "peace-offerings of oxen," though the mention of "half" the blood being sprinkled on the altar and half on the people may be an echo of the earlier rite. But the sprinkling itself is sacramental, and symbolic of consecration rather than of cleansing.<sup>3</sup> "The primary purpose of the sprinkling was to consecrate the covenant between Jehovah and

<sup>1</sup> *Folklore in the Old Testament*, Part II, ch. i.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> Consecration involves cleansing in a broad sense. The point is that the sprinkling of the people is not a kind of washing; the emphasis is on the positive relationship established. Hebrews passes in a flash to the direct idea of cleansing in ix. 21.

the people, the invisible bond between them being indicated by the community of origin of the blood on the altar, as representing Jehovah, and the blood on the persons of the people."<sup>1</sup> Its idea, that is to say, is positive and forward-looking rather than retrospective or expiatory.

In what sense does this type of sacrifice find its fulfilment in the Blood of Christ? Or—more simply—in what way does Jesus through His death mediate a new covenant? I say more simply, because it is consideration of the character of the covenant mediated which will set us on the road to an answer.

By the Christian Covenant we mean that positive and settled relationship between God and man which stands in God's grace and man's faith and is the ground of the life of worship. Satisfaction, purification, forgiveness—these are part of the Covenant as an introduction may be part of a book; and in the order of the spiritual life they are indispensable; but they are not its substantive part. That substantive part is the security of salvation or eternal life which God made to man in the Death, Resurrection and Ascension of His Son, and in the consequent outpouring of the Spirit, and which the energy of the same Spirit and the Church's response of faith and love still maintain. Christ's Blood is "the Blood of the New Covenant," because His death was and is the crucial and central act on which its blessings are secured. We could not of ourselves open a way into the life of salvation and the service of the living God; for only a total and complete surrender to the Spirit could do that. That is why Hebrews reminds us that Jesus offered Himself "through eternal Spirit" to God. His self-oblation was no merely individual act: it was the act of One Who was always man's representative, and whose Life was for ever and uninterruptedly surrendered to the grace of God.

Further, such interaction of God and man in the historic Person and acts of Jesus Christ could not be achieved without death. A covenant-sacrifice always involves the

<sup>1</sup> Hort, *The First Epistle of St. Peter*, note on i. 2.

surrender of the lower values for the sake of the higher. The parties set aside their personal and transient interests and desires for an end that enlists the will in some more abiding and less individual purpose; and their relation to the common purpose is ratified and symbolized in their treatment of the sacrificial victim. But in the case of Jesus, mediating the new covenant of the supernatural life, the lower values to be surrendered ranged out to include the whole limitations of purely human life—its successiveness, its cage of time and space, its independence. Death alone could set free His Spirit into universal power. “I have a baptism to be baptized with: and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!”—that is the obverse of the experience which underlies His apocalyptic visions of Judgment and Sovereignty. And such conflict finds solution only through death. Through death He was glorified, because through death He passed to the Risen and Ascended Life and became “life-giving Spirit.”<sup>1</sup> Till then, “the Spirit was not”; and the spiritual covenant foreshadowed by the prophets was not established except through Calvary.

This interpretation of our Lord’s death as the supreme Covenant-sacrifice, whereby believers stand in the spiritual and worship-ful life which Jesus has opened for them, seems to find endorsement in the celebrated passage in Romans vi. where St. Paul speaks of Baptism. Two kinds of symbolism are used in the New Testament in connection with Baptism. In the one case the stress is laid on the symbolic *object*, water, and the idea is that of washing or cleansing (e.g., Eph. v. 26, Tit. iii. 5). In the other the stress is laid on the symbolic *action*, dipping or immersion. This is the more common, and is the symbolism employed in Romans vi. In the action of Baptism the Christian recapitulates in his own personal experience Christ’s Death, Burial and Resurrection. The Cross terminated for Jesus the power of sin and death, because in it He was emancipated from the conditions of successiveness where sin and death hold sway; and He rose again to live “in uninterrupted commu-

<sup>1</sup> cf. Heb. xii. 24, “The blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

nion with God.”<sup>1</sup> Baptism is the symbolic action by which believers are made to participate in the new life and standing with God thus won for them by man’s representative. Hebrews says (ix. 16) that “where there is a covenant, a death of him that made it must needs be presented.” A covenant implies, that is to say, on the part of the covenanter the decisive cessation of all such relationships as are inconsistent with the bond; and in the case of the covenant of eternal life, this will mean the actual death of Him who mediates it: He will be victim as well as agent of the Covenant. In Romans vi. St. Paul does not use the language of covenanting, and his thought is perhaps freer in consequence. But the underlying idea is substantially the same; and St. Paul is but applying it to the moral life when he exhorts his readers to reckon themselves “dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.” (vi. 11).

On God’s side the covenant needs, and admits of no renewal (Rom. ix. 11, Heb. ix. 26); but on man’s side, where successiveness still rules, it does. And so, before He made His one oblation, Jesus provided the means whereby the Covenanter’s death might be continually “presented” or “brought forward.” “This cup,” He said, “is the new covenant in my blood.” “As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup,” says St. Paul, “ye do shew forth the Lord’s death till He come.” No one who has entered into the meaning of the Eucharist can fail to see how it develops, transfigures, and satisfies all the dim gropings of instinct expressed in the covenant-sacrifice of Abraham. The purpose of the covenant is changed from the promise of a multitudinous progeny in future ages to the realization of a life with God here and now “in the heavenly places”; the human covenanter is not the “father of many nations,” but the God-Man, representing all mankind of every age and clime; and the victim has become that same God-Man, whose accepted sacrifice we plead before the Father. But still between the “broken pieces”—the Body broken and the Blood outpoured—the eye of faith perceives the passing of “a smoking furnace

<sup>1</sup> Sanday and Headlam, *in loc.*

and a lamp of fire" (Gen. xv. 17); the awful Majesty, the consuming and illuminating Love, that betoken the Presence of God.

### (3)—COMMUNION AND FELLOWSHIP.

There remains yet a third group of O. T. sacrifices which were felt by the Christians of the first age to illustrate the significance of the Death of Jesus. They comprise the sacrifices commonly called "honorific": the Burnt-offering,<sup>1</sup> the continual Burnt-offering<sup>2</sup>, the Peace- or Thank-offering,<sup>3</sup> and the Meal-offering and Drink-offering<sup>4</sup> which usually accompanied these. The purport of these sacrifices was essentially *devotion*; they expressed the love, worship, and thanksgiving due from men to God, and the fellowship which He vouchsafed to have with them. The "sweet savour" of the Burnt-offering, as the smoke curled heavenwards, the burning of the fat and kidneys in the Peace-offering, and the pouring out of the Drink-offering at the foot of the altar probably indicate that these rites originated in the primitive notion of providing a meal for the Deity; and it was but a short step from that to the idea of the Deity and His worshippers sharing the meal together. It is this last point which is most prominent in the Peace-offering, the most typical of the sacrifices of the Old Dispensation.<sup>5</sup> The purely honorific element was represented in the burning of the fat and kidneys, and in the waving of the priests' parts before the altar; but the most significant feature of the rite is that all the worshippers partook of the victims which, whether as individuals or families or clans, they had brought to the sacrifice.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lev. i. 11-17, Ex. xxix. 15-18.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. xxix. 38-42, Num. xxviii. 3-8.

<sup>3</sup> Lev. iii. 1-16, vii. 11-21, 28-34, ix, xvii. 1-9, xxii. 21-23 (cf. 1 Sam. xi. 15, xx. 29, 1 Kings i. 19).

<sup>4</sup> Lev. ii. vi. 14-23, Num. xv. 1-6, Hos. ix. 4.

<sup>5</sup> H.D.B. art. Sacrifice, §16 b.

<sup>6</sup> Canon Kennett believes that originally the sacrificial meal was a feature of all these sacrifices, and that the abstinence of the worshippers from the sacrificial flesh in the cases of the burnt-offering, sin-offering, and guilt-offering was a later development due to fear of the god's displeasure.—*Sacrifice*, p. II.

All the elements in this group of sacrifices found their focus and richest embodiment in the Passover, which was at once piacular, eucharistic, and symbolic of fellowship.<sup>1</sup> It is probable that this feast sprang from origins of a cruder and more humble kind than the narrative in the Pentateuch would lead us to suppose. Originally a rite of protective smearing of the household door to ward off evil agencies, combined with an agricultural offering of unleavened cake, and perhaps a spring offering of firstlings, it came to be mainly a family festival connected with the cult of the household god or gods. Only later, it would seem, in the age of Josiah, was it given a national significance and associated with the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. But in the time of our Lord this association with a great historical deliverance of the nation—its redemption from Egypt—was no doubt the governing thought of the celebration. It was essentially a feast of commemoration and thanksgiving on the one hand, and on the other a rite which symbolized and so strengthened the bond which each Jew believed bound him to God and to every other member of God's people.

The disciples of Jesus were familiar with the ideas presented and the emotions stirred by the Jewish Passover; and even had they not seen Him give them a new significance and expression at the Last Supper, and remembered that His Death had synchronized with the slaying of the lambs, they would have had ground enough to see in the Cross the truth which the Paschal sacrifice had adumbrated.<sup>2</sup> For deliverance and fellowship represent two of the most outstanding features in the spiritual experience of the early Church. As the first Christians looked back on their old life, whether it had been spent in the cramping and disheartening atmosphere of Jewish legalism or in the network of ignoble ties and relationships which degraded much of the Græco-Roman world of the first century, they could not but regard the advent of Christianity as a supreme

<sup>1</sup> cf. H.D.B. art. "Passover." The Passover "combines the notion of sin-offering (the sprinkling of the blood), of burnt-offering (the victim being roasted intact), and of peace-offering (the victim being eaten by the worshippers)".

<sup>2</sup> cf. Heb. xiii. 10.

deliverance ; and they found in the free, yet close-knit, social life of the Christian Church a religious fellowship of a quality to compensate for both the pomps and the pleasures they had abandoned. It was natural, therefore, that when this new experience found expression, it should borrow the hallowed imagery and language of the Paschal sacrifice.

The idea of deliverance, moreover, and of its price was one which was common, though in different contexts, both to Jewish and to Gentile thought ; and it is probably in this fact that we should find the clue to the frequent use in the New Testament of words signifying " ransom " or " redemption."<sup>1</sup> For the Jew the " ransom "<sup>2</sup> was the price paid in commutation for a human life otherwise liable to death ; and the signal instance of this was the blood of the Paschal Lamb which had been smeared on the doors of the Israelites, when the first-born of the Egyptians were destroyed. It is this deliverance and its price, which are recalled by St. Peter, when he writes : " Ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers ; but with precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, even the Blood of Christ."<sup>3</sup> For the Gentile the associations of the term were different, but no less real. The redemption price was the sum paid by a slave out of his savings to a god, and used to secure his manumission, the god purchasing the slave from his master in order to set him free. Dr. Deissmann has shown how frequently St. Paul alluded to this custom in illustration of the Christian's emancipation from the law or from sin and of the new service into which he had entered.<sup>4</sup> Both to Jewish, and to Gentile Christians, therefore, the term and its cognates represented, though along different lines of association, the common fact and experience of emancipation through Christ.

<sup>1</sup> λύτρον, ἀντιλύτρον, λύτρωσις and cognates.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Ex. xxi. 30, xxx. 12, Num. xxxi. 50, xxxv. 31 f. See Swete on Mk. x. 45. cf. also Ex. xiii. 11-16, Num. iii. 44 f.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

<sup>4</sup> *Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 326 ff. In some cases, as at Cos the manumission was not complete without sacrifice.

The depth and strength of the corporate life in the early Church has been emphasized by theologians of all schools in recent years, and is sufficiently demonstrated by the way in which believers were commonly denoted by the term "brethren"; and, though it is clear that the first Christians were no strangers to schism and its attendant evils, writings such as the Epistle to the Ephesians or the First Epistle of St. John require us to picture a background of spiritual life in which a high order of Christian fellowship was a central feature of experience.

There are, however, certain aspects of the term "fellowship" itself, and of its cognates, as used in the New Testament, which call for more detailed treatment and have a special bearing upon the subject of this chapter. The primary meaning of the Greek word<sup>1</sup> translated "fellowship" in our Bible is partaking or sharing. This rendering is given in some of the passages in our English versions where the word occurs; but the variety of ways in which the word is translated is apt to obscure the fundamental conception denoted by it. Two points especially deserve notice. The first is that, in the great majority of cases where the term occurs, the emphasis is laid on the *sphere* of fellowship—that is to say, on the persons or things of which, or in which, the Christians partake.<sup>2</sup> Thus, St. Paul habitually uses the term in connexion with the free-will offering which he was collecting among the Gentile Churches for "the poor Saints" at Jerusalem; his readers take part in the "needs" of their poorer brethren<sup>3</sup>, in His "ministry," to them<sup>4</sup>, in his financial schemes generally<sup>5</sup>; so much so that the word becomes virtually a synonym for almsgiving.<sup>6</sup> More striking, however, is its use to denote the central fact of the Christian calling. This calling consists in a relationship to Christ which is described as a "partaking." God is faithful," says St. Paul, "by whom ye were called to the partak-

<sup>1</sup> κοινωνία, -ός, -εῖν. Ellicott says (rightly, I think) that the distinction between κοινωνεῖν and μετέχειν "cannot be substantiated."

<sup>2</sup> The object or sphere is expressed usually by the genitive case; sometimes by the dative, or (less directly) by εἰς with the accusative.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. xii. 13.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Phil. iv. 15.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Cor. ix. 13, Heb. xiii. 16.

ing of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. i. 9). If we translate simply as in A. V., "unto fellowship with His Son," we miss the significance of the fact that precisely the same words and construction are used when the sphere of Christian fellowship is thought of as "the Divine Nature" (2 Peter i. 4), or as Christ's sufferings (1 Peter iv. 13; Phil. iii. 10), or as Christ's Body and Blood (1 Cor. x. 16), or as the Spirit or Holy Ghost (Phil. ii. 1; 2 Cor. xiii. 14). For an identical belief underlies all these usages. To the Apostles and their readers the partaking of the Holy Spirit, which as members of the Church they experienced, was at the same time a partaking of Christ Himself. We may go further and say that the "communion" of Christ's Body and Blood is for St. Paul nothing essentially different from the "communion" of the Spirit. In both alike Christian fellowship finds its ground and mainspring in a partaking of a common object, namely, Christ; though in the one case the manner is "spiritual," in the other sacramental. The modern philosophy which purports to see an antithesis between these two modes of inherence in Christ, and of fellowship through Him—whatever may have been its justification at particular junctures of history—is not one that finds any support in the New Testament. There the sacramental is the spiritual embodied in effectual symbol; Spirit and sacrament are not the two horns of a dilemma, but mutually complementary expressions of one Reality; and that Reality is Christ. "Our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son."

The second point to be observed is that the whole Church itself is described as a priestly body<sup>1</sup>, and that each of the characteristic activities in which this body takes part and so realizes its fellowship is therefore described in sacrificial language. This is true of almsgiving<sup>2</sup>; of the missionary work among the Gentiles<sup>3</sup>; of the faith and

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 5, Rev. i. 6, v. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xv. 27, 2 Cor. ix. 11-13, Phil. iv. 18, Heb. xiii. 16. In the first three of these passages the two ideas of sacrifice and of fellowship are closely combined in the same context.

<sup>3</sup> Col. i. 28, Rom. xv. 16 (note the terms *λειτοῦνεγόν*, *ἱερουργοῦντα*, *προσφορά*, *εὐπρόσδεκτος*, *ηγιασμένη*), 2 Cor. ii. 15, Phil. i. 5.

prayers of believers<sup>1</sup>; of the trials, sufferings, and self-dedication involved in the Christian life.<sup>2</sup> And these sacrifices are sanctified and made acceptable by the Holy Ghost, in whom all alike have communion. They have, moreover, a mystical relation to the sufferings and sacrifice of Christ. St. Paul can speak of filling up in his flesh what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ,<sup>3</sup> and of "becoming conformed unto His death" through partaking of His sufferings<sup>4</sup>; and of believers "bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus."<sup>5</sup> Bishop Lightfoot is no doubt right in warning us against any interpretation of the first of these passages which would suggest that the element of satisfaction in Christ's death upon the Cross was incomplete. But we should not therefore dissociate them from the idea of the Church as a sacrificial fellowship, centred in the Crucified and Risen Christ, which is taught so clearly in the New Testament. "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us"; and we "keep the feast" by participating in the spirit of sincerity and truth<sup>6</sup> in which He laid down His life. We imitate Christ most closely and show the meaning of His sacrifice most plainly by the quality of our fellowship—that is, when we "walk in love" (Eph. v. 2).<sup>7</sup>

Such being the experience which the first Christians enjoyed of deliverance through Christ and of fellowship in Him and in His sacrifice, it is not hard to see how the conception of Jesus as "The Lamb of God" should have passed into the foreground of the Church's mind. I do

<sup>1</sup> Phil. ii. 17, cf. Rom. xv. 27, Philem. 6; Rev. v. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xii. 1, 2 Cor. vi. 4, 2 Cor. i. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Col. i. 24.

<sup>4</sup> Phil. iii. 10, 1 Peter iv. 13.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 10.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. v. 7.

<sup>7</sup> The moral significance of Communion has been well expressed by Dr. Norman Leys, in his *Kenya* (pp.371 f.): "Again, the claim is often advanced that Christians show their true unity by all alike partaking in that rite which beyond all others Christians account the most sacred. In Africa the races nearly always partake separately. But when they do so worship together they celebrate a rite that was intended as a symbol. Its purpose is to show that no sacrifice whereby mankind's common lot can be shared is ever too great, no gift too extravagant to succour the need of the least worthy, and that those who share the symbols of that ancient gift and sacrifice seek to share without stint or regret all that lies on life's table with all who sit around it. The rite is sacred, not as being unique, not as contrasting, for its partakers, with their common ideas and actions, but as being a pattern."

not mean that the memories and associations of the Passover suffice of themselves to account for the developed form of that conception as it meets us in Revelation and the Fourth Gospel. But side by side with them there was a prophecy of Isaiah which from the earliest times<sup>1</sup> the Church regarded as an inspired commentary on the Death of Christ. Through that prophecy the Church learnt to understand those things in the Lord's character and sufferings which at the time had been unintelligible to them. In His innocence, meekness, and unresisting surrender to insult and death, they came to see the true meaning of sacrifice. They saw it as consummated in self-sacrifice, and in self-sacrifice achieving its end in the redemption of a new "seed." It is difficult to imagine a sharper "transvaluation of values" than was involved when what had appeared as a judicial murder came to be regarded, and thankfully regarded, as a sacrifice. Yet that was the change which took place in the minds of the disciples within a few weeks of the Crucifixion. Isaiah had given a new meaning to the sacrificial victim by drawing attention not only to its death<sup>2</sup> and its vicarious work, but also to its behaviour; this last was, indeed, the first point of analogy with the Ideal Figure he portrayed. The disciples remembered how that point was reproduced in the bearing of their Lord before His accusers; and they noted, too, how the ceremonial spotlessness required in the Levitical victims, and implied in the prophecy of Isaiah, had found its fulfilment in the moral sinlessness of Christ,<sup>3</sup> and the completeness of His obedience to the Father. We have, therefore, converging lines of thought in primitive Christianity all pointing to the Cross as the world's altar<sup>4</sup> and to the Crucified as the Lamb of God. There is the fact of emancipation through Christ; the experience of fellowship in Him; and the knowledge of the voluntariness of His self-oblation; and these three agreed in one.

The two books of the New Testament in which the con-

<sup>1</sup> cf. Acts viii. 32 f.

<sup>2</sup> The death is in fact not actually mentioned.

<sup>3</sup> cf. 1 Pet. i. 19.

<sup>4</sup> cf. Heb. xiii. 10.

ception of Christ as the Lamb of God comes to maturest expression are the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel. In the former of these the designation occurs no fewer than twenty-seven times, and it provides one of the main *motifs* of the book. It is probable<sup>1</sup> that the phrase combines two sets of ideas originally distinct, the Apocalyptic image of a Lamb who is a mighty Leader being fused with the prophetic and Christian idea of the Lamb of Sacrifice. What is important for our present purpose is the use which is made of this conception and the meaning given to it, once the materials have coalesced. The central feature of the conception is that Jesus, now exalted, personifies and embodies divine, self-sacrificing, and victorious Love. He is at once "in the midst of the Throne" and in the midst of a vast concourse of spiritual beings—the four living creatures, the four-and-twenty elders, the angelic hosts, and the multitude of the redeemed; He is adored as the Deliverer and Redeemer, who has created the royal and priestly fellowship of believers; and the closeness of His relation to the Church is expressed in the image of the Lamb's "wife," or "bride." The picture is of the Atonement in its final consummation, when its full fruits are harvested. It represents Christ's sacrifice, not as an event in time crowning His earthly life, nor even as an episode in the history of man, but as an eternal "moment" of the being and experience of God. That law according to which human fellowship seems to require self-sacrifice for its consolidation and development, particularly in spiritual things, is seen to be no product of man's experience, but to be grounded in the structure of Reality itself, and to have its sanction in the heavens. The final *rationale* of atonement is shown to lie in the nature of God Himself, who is All-conquering and All-spending Love; and it is that Love revealed and made actual for us in Christ's sacrifice which prompts the adoring worship of the redeemed.

The representation of the Atonement in the Fourth Gospel is perhaps the most consistent to be found in the New Testament. It not only permeates the whole work,

<sup>1</sup> cf. Charles, *The Revelation of St. John*, I. cxiii ff.

appearing in many slight touches whose significance may easily escape us<sup>1</sup>; but it is throughout a development of the theme enunciated at the outset by the Baptist, when he bids his disciples "behold the Lamb of God." From the beginning, that is to say, Jesus is not only the Son, but the Lamb, the sacrificial Victim. And this idea is worked out through subtle gradations of meaning which have an intimate relation to the unfolding of the narrative. In the first four chapters the emphasis is on the aspect of Purification, and especially of the purification of worship. Jesus has come to take away "the sin of the world," to supersede "the Jews' manner of purifying,"<sup>2</sup> to substitute a new and true sacrificial worship for the crude slaughterings in the Temple,<sup>3</sup> to inaugurate a Covenant founded on a change of heart.<sup>4</sup> In the 6th chapter, where the Evangelist evidently intends us to understand that a crisis in the public ministry was reached, a further disclosure of the new dispensation is made. Its essential content is the gift to man of eternal life; and the means of receiving and appropriating it is the partaking of Christ's sacrifice. The "eternal life" here promised is precisely that worshipful life of fellowship with God in which, as we saw earlier, salvation consists. And the promise is unfolded by degrees. There is first the claim to be "the bread of life," in that whoever beholds the Son and believes on Him has life eternal. Next there comes the disclosure that this bread is His flesh; He gives Himself as a sacrifice for the life of the world; The Son is the Lamb. The third section of the discourse concerns the partaking of this sacrifice, which is described in sacramental language as an eating of His flesh and a drinking of His blood. Finally, when He has withdrawn from the publicity of the synagogue and is with a

<sup>1</sup> cf. above, p. 160, and the reference to Mr. Hoskyns's article there given.

<sup>2</sup> John ii. 6.

<sup>3</sup> John ii. 13-22, iv. I am not convinced by Dr. Eisen's interpretation of St. John's version of the cleansing of the Temple.

<sup>4</sup> John iii. 1-11, 22-30. It is significant that the wine substituted for the water of purification at Cana is for partaking, and that the water of baptism in John iii. leads on at once to the water for drinking in chapter iv.

number of disciples, He indicates that His message is one of "spirit" and "life," and can only be realized after He has ascended to the Father. And each stage of the unfolding of this promise is marked by a fresh rupture or secession among His hearers ; until at the last only the Twelve are left. And one of them is a traitor.

The question has often been asked why St. John inserts this long discourse at this point. It is without parallel in the other Gospels, and internal evidence suggests that in form at least, it is largely coloured by later Christian thought. Moreover, the Evangelist regards it apparently as exempting him from the necessity of recording the institution of the Eucharist. In the present state of our knowledge no solution of the difficulty can be more than provisional ; yet it may be worth while to suggest some clues for consideration. All the narratives of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, which is the immediate occasion of this discourse in St. John, suggest that the incident was not only a miracle but a rite<sup>1</sup>. Further, in St. Luke's gospel, the record of the incident is followed immediately<sup>2</sup> by the searching question addressed by Jesus to the disciples as to Who He was, by St. Peter's confession, and by the Lord's warning about the self-sacrifice involved in following Him. It is reasonable to suppose that St. Luke saw a connexion between the rite and the conversation which followed it ; and that both had reference in his mind to truths about Jesus and about the relation of His disciples to Him<sup>3</sup>—truths, moreover, whose discovery marked a turning-point, according to all the Evangelists, in our Lord's ministry. At the same time the connexion was not, and could not be, clear to the disciples at the time ; and St. Luke, therefore, writing as a historian,

<sup>1</sup> cf. Sanday, *Outlines*, p. 162 ; Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*.

<sup>2</sup> This is the point at which occurs St. Luke's "Great Omission" of Mark. cf. Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, pp. 172 ff. If the view advocated in the text holds good, we have no need of the hypothesis that St. Luke used a mutilated copy of St. Mark.

<sup>3</sup> It is worth noting that St. Mark's narrative of the feeding of the Four Thousand (viii. 1-10) is closely followed by conversation which, despite its obscurity, certainly suggests that Jesus expected His disciples to see in the incidents of feeding some hidden truths about Himself and what was involved in following Him (cf. viii. 14-21). And only a brief account of a healing separates this conversation from the question as to Who He was, etc.

does not expand the point. St. John, however, writing as a theologian, is not bound by St. Luke's self-imposed limits. He has brought his narrative to a point where all the main actors in the great drama have been distinguished—the Jews, the doubters, the Twelve, the traitor, and the Lord Himself. He desires to orientate them around the central principles of the great revelation which He is describing. These are precisely those truths which St. Luke makes Jesus first enunciate or elicit after the feeding of the Five Thousand, and which he implies to have been connected with that event. What St. John does, therefore, is to expand and develop out of the miracle or rite those lessons of critical importance which had been implicit in it; to interpret those lessons in the light of the Church's experience of eucharistic communion with Christ; and to insist that the Sonship and the sacrifice of Jesus were at once the main ground of opposition to Christianity and the rock on which alone Christian faith and fellowship were built.

Three chapters of controversy follow the crisis recorded in this great Discourse, and serve both to reveal the profound chasm which now divided Jesus from His compatriots, and to prepare the way for fuller teaching as to the character of the new Christian fellowship. As M. Godet says, "the sheep of Jesus, within the vast fold of the theocracy, increasingly separate themselves from the body of the flock, and *I and you*, which formed the theme of chapter 8, is more and more replaced by *I and mine* which forms a brief summary of the new situation."<sup>1</sup> And it is made clear that this new fellowship of "*I and mine*" is rooted in self-sacrifice. Jesus is come that His sheep may have life, and have it abundantly, and this gift is sealed to them by the fact that He lays down His life for them. Moreover, this is His voluntary act<sup>2</sup>, and is accepted by the Father<sup>3</sup> as an expression of His own Love as well as of the Son's. The Love of Jesus which expends itself in the care for His own is no other than the Love of God. We are very close to the

<sup>1</sup> *Commentary on St. John x, 21, II.* p. 397.

<sup>2</sup> x. 18.

<sup>3</sup> x. 14, 15, 17.

idea which is represented in Revelation by the image of the Lamb, as it had been slain, "in the midst of the throne."

Nevertheless, the idea is still not completely worked out. The principle of vicarious Love as the ground of the new life of fellowship and worship is laid down; but its relation to the transcendent order of Reality, which is called "the Kingdom of God" is indicated rather than expounded. The raising of Lazarus, brought as it is into close connexion with the anointing at Bethany, is a fresh illustration of how the life of man is bound up with the Death of the Life-Giver; and the theme of sacrifice is reiterated by various figures in the scene—by Caiaphas, by Mary, by the crowd with their palm-branches<sup>1</sup>, by Jesus Himself at the prompting of the Greeks. But it is not until we come to the Last Supper that these scattered hints are gathered up into a clear and compact revelation.

"Jesus knowing that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."<sup>2</sup> This is the *exordium* with which St. John prefaces his narrative of the Passion, as though to summarize at the outset the meaning of what he will relate. And this meaning is focused in two points. Christ's death is a departure to the Father, and it is a consummation of Love. By a startling symbolic action in the manner of the prophets<sup>3</sup> Jesus teaches His disciples that the Kingdom on which He is entering is a Kingdom of Love made perfect in sacrifice. The presence of Judas and the magnanimity of his treatment serve to throw up in sharp relief the true significance of what is happening; and the departure of the traitor into the night is the signal that the issue is certain. The true glory of the Son of Man is revealed in that He is to depart to the Father by the way of sacrifice; while beyond that there remains for Him a vindication of His work which

<sup>1</sup> xii. 13. St. John alone mentions that they were of palm, such as were carried around the altar and waved at the Feast of Tabernacles.

<sup>2</sup> John xiii. 1.

<sup>3</sup> cf. an illuminating article on this subject in *Theology*, March, 1925, by the Rev. R. A. Henderson.

none shall be able to mistake, and for them the one all-comprehending commandment of mutual love. And around these themes the rest of the Discourses turn. He is going to the Father, yet not so as to leave them alone ; He will come again and gather them to Himself in His Spirit, so that they may be with Him. They on their side cannot follow Him now ; but they can still love Him and love one another, and in that love enjoy the Presence of the Father and of the Son. The meaning and purpose of Christ's Death is throughout revealed as intimately connected with the Ascension and the mission of the Spirit, on the one hand, and with the unity of the Church's fellowship on the other. And finally, this connexion is clinched in the narrative itself, in those features which are distinctively Johannine. Not only is the Death of Jesus made to synchronize with the slaying of the Passover lambs, but a sentence of the Paschal ordinance is cited as prophetic of a significant detail attending it. Immediately before the end the Evangelist points out a group standing by the Cross which represented in poignant perfection the fellowship of His Love ; and it is on this group that the blood of Christ's sacrifice first falls from His wounded side. Further, He gives us to suppose that the Ascension took place and that the Spirit was given, at least in their essential reality, on the day of the Resurrection. We may be sure that this agglomeration and concentration of elements which the Synoptic tradition had either omitted or had shown in separation was deliberate on St. John's part. He wished to show that Christ's sacrifice, Paschal as it was, could only be understood in the context of His ascended Life and gift of the Spirit, and that these no less than the Death were fundamental factors in the truth of the Atonement.

And what is that truth ? It is no easy matter to try to sum up in modern speech a conception which at once gathers up and re-interprets the profoundest intuitions of all earlier religion ; and much is of necessity beyond our ken. But we may say at once that we are moving here precisely in the sphere of that question concerning Salvation from which we started. It is a question not only of forgive-

ness but of deliverance, and of deliverance not only from sins, but from sin—from the self-centred life of the natural man into the God-centred and worship-ful life of the spiritual man. Our own everyday experience teaches us how all fellowship exacts of us some shifting of the centre of interest from the self, even if it be only to some common aim which associates share. And this is the more felt, the higher we ascend in the order of fellowship. Some abandonment of egotism is required for any corporate work—say, in commerce or games. But in the higher reaches such as those of home or school, more is required than this. The spirit of fellowship is felt as a real and concrete entity and value, calling for disinterested service and able to satisfy the personality in the very acts of self-sacrifice which it demands. The love of each is stirred by the love of all realizing itself in self-donation to the purposes of all and of each. In this fact we have an intimation of the Law of Love which governs the Kingdom of Heaven. That Kingdom is a Kingdom of Ends or Values realized in a fellowship of spiritual beings, partly here on earth, but more fully and more widely in the unseen and supernatural order beyond this life. Their fellowship is with one another and with God ; and its law is Love, since God is Love. And this Love must express itself in self-donation. Only so can the eternal life of this kingdom be communicated to its members. Christ's sacrifice is His self-donation—an eternal activity of His Being, manifested in time in His Ministry and supremely in His Death. But the significance of His Death is not only ethical, but metaphysical : for death is the gate through which man passes finally from the temporal and visible to the invisible and eternal. Jesus made death to be the gate of life for us, because He made it in Himself the gate of love through which the Divine self-donation could reach us. And that gate remains open always in the gift and work of the Spirit. That same "Eternal Spirit" through Whom He made His own sacrifice and oblation remains as the Power of His Presence in which we partake and so find fellowship with Him and with the whole body of believers. And this Passover of the Spirit was made available for us,

when the Lamb of God had been slain and had ascended to the Father ; and because "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost" are ours, we are heirs of the worship-ful life which is the true end of our being.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE RISEN AND ASCENDED LORD

And then our Lord opened my spiritual eye and showed me my soul in midst of my heart. I saw the soul so large as it were an endless world, and as it were a blissful kingdom. And by the conditions that I saw therein I understood that it is a worshipful City. In the midst of that City sitteth our Lord Jesus, God and Man, a fair Person of large stature, highest Bishop, most majestic King, most Worshipful Lord ; and I saw Him clad majestically. And worshipfully He sitteth in the Soul, even right in peace and rest. And the Godhead ruleth and sustaineth heaven and earth and all that is—sovereign Might, sovereign Wisdom, and sovereign Goodness—(but) the place that Jesus taketh in *our soul* He shall never remove it, without end, as to my sight : for in us is His homeliest home and His *endless dwelling*.—MOTHER JULIAN.

#### I. INTRODUCTORY.

IF we consider the religion of our contemporaries and go beyond the loyalties of group or denomination which at once unite and divide them, we find that they are distinguished not only by different religious beliefs (which admit of relatively precise statement) and by different religious experiences (which are exceedingly difficult to classify), but also by differences of a third kind which we may call differences of mental and emotional disposition.<sup>1</sup> This third category occupies a position midway between the other two, and it appears no less essential to religion than they. Its relation to belief is that of child to parent ; it postulates some belief as its ground and cause, though it is not itself intellectual ; and it is significant that closely similar attitudes may result from widely divergent beliefs. Its relation to religious experience, on the other hand, is the converse of this. It generates, fertilizes, mediates it. Unlike religious experience, it can be inculcated by teaching, as when we

<sup>1</sup> cf. an article by Mr. Spens in *Theology*, Jan. 1925.

teach our children the habits of piety. In the normal Christian home or school these habits are learnt *pari passu* with, or even antecedently to, the religious beliefs on which they are based ; and they impress on the child's mind dispositions of intrinsic worth, which may long outlive them. But there is ample testimony to the fact that they are also normally the seed out of which grows in later days the full flower of a living, personal faith. This mental attitude, moreover, is a more settled element of religion than what is called religious experience. The latter is in a large measure occasional, incalculable, even tempestuous ; answering to that wind of which Christ said that it " bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth." But the mental and emotional dispositions on which it depends are normally stable throughout, able to function alike in tranquillity or in storm.

If this holds good of religion generally, it is no less true within Christianity itself, and indeed wherever Christ counts for anything at all in men's lives and thoughts. Missionaries from India and the Far East, for instance, tell us that, while an openly confessed faith in Jesus Christ makes but slow progress among these civilizations, yet there is a wide-spread respect for His Personality and teaching. Conditions not dissimilar are found at home. Respect and admiration for Christ denote precisely the attitude of mind towards the Founder of Christianity, which distinguishes thousands of men and women of our own time and country. Of the two, respect is the more rudimentary. It may spring from an appreciation of Christian laws and institutions, or of Christian character in individuals, or of its social utility ; though such appreciation is commonly tinged by a strong vein of criticism. The Christ Who is the object of this respect is essentially a Figure of the past. Men look back to Him as the historical originator of what they appreciate and criticize in the Christianity of their own day. The result is seen in that large body of persons who extend an indulgent tolerance to the Church without giving it overt or active support ; they are aware that the Church

at least points back to Someone with whom each age must somehow or other come to terms.

Admiration for Christ represents an advance upon the attitude of respect, so far as the approach to religion is concerned. Here the elements of aloofness and of self-defence, so prominent in respect, fall into the background, and the feelings of wonder and humility come to the fore. A strong ethical enthusiasm is often developed, as between disciple and teacher ; and the ideals which Christ proclaimed, or is believed to have proclaimed, are warmly embraced as principles to be applied to life. Theologically, this attitude of mind leads to a keen devotion to the character of Jesus as revealed in the Gospels, and to the endeavour to enter into that filial relation to God which is considered to represent the sum total of His own religion ; while His message of the Kingdom of Heaven is interpreted as positing an ideal End for social and political activity. Much that is best in Liberal Protestantism may be traced to this motive as its source.

Yet neither respect nor admiration can be said to describe the mental attitude towards Jesus Christ which has marked the Christian Church down the ages and which finds classical and normative expression in the pages of the New Testament. One word, and only one, sums up that attitude with any adequacy : it is the word Worship.<sup>1</sup> Worship is the typical attitude of religion, and here in the New Testament it is concentrated upon Christ. Whether we take the attitude of the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration, or on the way going up to Jerusalem, or in the Upper Room after the Resurrection ; or that of St. Stephen at his martyrdom or Saul in the moment of his conversion ; or if we consider what St. Paul says of Him as risen for our justification, set at God's right hand to be our perpetual King, declared by the Ascension to be the object of our faith and worship, Head of the Church and Source of all authority and grace, Bestower of all ministerial commission

<sup>1</sup> Professor Otto in *The Idea of the Holy* would use the term "numinous" for this attitude of mind. But it seems best here to stick to the old English word.

and power ; or if we note how St. Peter speaks of Christ as the End of our moral life and Lord of All, and as the great Agent in Baptism (1 Peter iii. 21.), or how the writer to the Hebrews depicts the glory of His heavenly priesthood, or how the Seer of Patmos envisages Him as the Lamb surrounded by the adoring multitudes of Heaven, the awful Judge, the eternal King—wherever we turn in the New Testament, the witness is the same. These writers and first readers do not look back into the past for the centre of their religion, nor (save perhaps for a short period) is it in the future. Its centre is the living Christ, above them, present here and now with them and in them for ever. Him they adore ; through Him and in His Name they pray ; in Him they find their unity, their joy, their stedfastness, their comfort ; in Him is grounded every moment of their spiritual life—their call, their election, their pardon, their redemption. To speak of respect or admiration in such a context is an absurdity. The mental attitude revealed is that of believers and worshippers. Christ is on the God-ward side for them. They look upwards to Him as they look up to God.

When St. Matthew is recording the Nativity of Christ, he recalls how Isaiah had prophesied the birth of a child whose Name should be Emmanuel, “God with us” ; and he claims that this prophecy is fulfilled. Christian theology has endorsed that claim, and has elaborated its significance in the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Blessed Trinity. With the history of that doctrinal development we are not concerned. What is important rather to observe is that at every point it bears the marks of being not so much a deduction from texts as the correlative of a mental attitude and a religious experience which the words “God with us” aptly express. Christ not only was, while on earth, but is now and for all time the Presence of God. This is the fundamental *differentia* of Christianity considered as a religion. A religion survives only in so far as it succeeds in making God accessible to its votaries—in other words, in mediating to them His Presence. The reformation of every religion lies in the clearing away of things which obstruct that

relationship and in the opening out of new avenues of vision and endeavour. And a religion decays and dies when it can no longer vivify with God's Presence the central values of Goodness and Beauty and Truth which men seem born to covet. In all this, Christianity forms no exception to the rule. Its distinct and essential genius lies rather in the certainty and clarity of its revelation of God. It finds Him in His fulness in One who for a time lived on earth as Man, and whose character we can mark in its reaction to all the vicissitudes of human life, and who now reigns as the Object of our worship, and draws near to us in power and benediction. It is that double truth about Christ, His exaltation no less than His humiliation, which constitutes the message of the Incarnation. "This is life eternal," Jesus said, "that they should know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

And this faith, and the mental attitude which goes with it are the more impressive when we reflect that they emerge on the background of a deeply spiritual monotheism. This was the element in Judaism which more than any other attracted the serious minds of the Gentile world in the first days of the Christian era. The type of religious belief and practice in which the Evangelists and St. Paul and St. Peter were trained is the last soil in the world where one could expect any ideas involving the deification of a man to gain a foothold. The truth is, however, that we are not asked to believe in any such impossibility. The change that took place in the Apostles' minds when they worshipped Christ as God was essentially an enlargement and enrichment of their conception of God. It is not that a man has become a god; but that God has become human, more knowable, more accessible, and more personal than ever before. His august prerogatives of Creation, Redemption, and Judgment are not transferred to another, but He is thought of as exercising them in the Person of One who is Man as well as God. "No man hath seen God at any time; God Only-begotten, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

What made this change possible in the minds of the first

believers was the fact of the Resurrection and Ascension. I say "fact" rather than "facts" because either is unintelligible without the other. In the faith of the New Testament, the Resurrection represents the climax of Christ's earthly life, while the Ascension is the symbol of His heavenly life. And the aim of this chapter is to show what this risen and ascended life of Jesus Christ means for the religion of our own time, indeed of all times; how it declares the significance, and fulfils the purpose, of the Incarnation, and in what sense it is fundamental to that attitude to God which is characteristic of Christianity.

## II. THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION AS HISTORICAL FACTS.

ONE of the principal difficulties which the idea of the Ascension presents to men's minds arises from the symbolic language in which it is necessarily expressed. The difficulty is by no means peculiar to this doctrine; but it is well exemplified in it, and a good deal of prejudice may be dissipated if we meet it frankly at this stage. Further, the difficulty is not felt only in one quarter. If the admission that a historical statement in the Creed such as "He ascended into Heaven" contains a strong symbolic element and suggests to the rationalist something disingenuous, believers also sometimes take alarm at what seems likely to dissolve the Faith into vagueness. Of the two objections, however, the second need not detain us long. If Christ's Ascension into Heaven be taken to mean simply that He proceeded literally upwards to a literal place literally situated above this earth, then it must be pointed out at once that such an interpretation appears to have no sanction in antiquity. I do not know when it arose; though the "Black Rubric" in our Prayer-Book indicates that it was commonly accepted in the Reformation period, and it appears to be at least endorsed by so great a divine as Bishop Pearson.<sup>1</sup> But that is not how the Fathers at

<sup>1</sup> *On the Creed.* Article VI. 270 ff. "As therefore when we say Christ ascended, we understand a literal and local ascent," etc.

least understood it. Jerome, who may be taken to represent the straitest sect of Western orthodoxy, styles such an exposition of the Ascension as "nonsense"; and we may say summarily that the main tradition of Christian theology before and since would endorse his judgment.

The rationalist's charge of disingenuousness is on a different footing. It springs from a radical inability to conceive of reality except in terms of blunt and literal statement of fact. For him either a thing answers to its description or it does not: there is no middle way. Psychological causes or the exigencies of controversies may make it very difficult for a man to dislodge himself from this position; yet in so far as he is open to reason, he will be hard put to it to maintain it. For the truth is that the use of symbolic terms is a characteristic not only of the language of religion but of every language when it comes to deal with what transcends ordinary experience. The scientist, the philosopher, the lover, the poet habitually find themselves struggling to express concepts or feelings for which no adequate words are available; and they are driven therefore to use words and phrases in a symbolic, not a literal, sense. The case is well stated by the late Sir Walter Raleigh<sup>1</sup> "The thing to be expressed, even at its simplest, is far beyond the limited compass of the instrument, and, save by partial indications, can no more be expressed in words than a symphony can be rendered upon the flute. . . . The men who are best framed for contemplation, whose life is nourished on the feelings that are also the life of poetry, are often mute and incapable of imparting their experience:

Theirs is the language of the heavens, the power,  
The thought, the image, and the silent joy :  
Words are but under-agents in their souls ;  
When they are grasping with their greatest strength,  
They do not breathe among them. . . .

Man, therefore, cannot speak the truth which is beyond him and above him. When he attempts it, he must needs

<sup>1</sup> *Wordsworth*, pp. 116, 117.

use the words that have been put into his mouth by others, and use them very much as he has been taught to use them. And words were not invented at first, and are very imperfectly adapted at best, for the severer purposes of truth. They bear upon them all the weaknesses of their origin, and all the maims inflicted by the prejudices and fanaticisms of generations of their employers. They perpetuate the memory or prolong the life of many noble forms of human extravagance, and they are the monuments of many splendid virtues. But with all their abilities and dignities they are seldom well fitted for the quiet and accurate statement of the thing that is."

And this criticism of the limited capacity of words for compassing "the severer purposes of truth" is one that is accepted to-day even in circles where the strictest principles of reason are professed. It explains, for example, why such masters of Pure Mathematics as Dr. Whitehead and Mr. Bertrand Russell have found it necessary to invent a new and complete ideography as the vehicles of their discoveries ; why so often art or music succeeds in conveying a meaning where speech would fail ; and why civil society, no less than religious, in its greatest and most solemn moments calls in the aid of ceremonial to be the voice of its otherwise silent aspirations.

The truth of Christ's Risen and Ascended Life obviously belongs to the domain of things which are beyond literal description ; for it transcends, *ex hypothesi*, the measures of human experience. At the same time it is not divorced from them. Christ, that is to say, who is now risen and ascended is the same Jesus who also lived and died historically among men. What we have to do with is not two different Persons, but with successive modes of being or experience in one Person. There is a point in His experience, and in men's experience of Him, where the historical passes into the supra-historical. Such a point is the Resurrection, and even more decisively the Ascension ; and the only language appropriate to such a moment is language that is at once historical and symbolic. Such language we have in the Christian Creeds.

A statement of this kind demands inevitably, however, a more exact precision. "Where," the sceptic will say, "do you draw the line between history and symbol?" Or, as orthodoxy puts it, "What is of faith in the credal statements of the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord?" One important answer to this question is that of Modernism, which claims to give a mediating reply. Even the most advanced Modernist would agree that the Personality of Jesus survived death, and that His immortal Spirit can still enter into relation with men. They would add also that the stainless innocence of His life secured for Him a relationship of unspeakable intimacy with the Father such as might well be symbolized in the figure of "sitting at God's right hand." More than this, they say, is unwarranted by evidence and uncongenial to faith.

Before coming to what I conceive to be the issues for faith involved in this position, I propose to say something about the historical evidence in the case, and first in regard to the Resurrection. The documentary testimony consists of the four Gospels, representing at least three distinct sources of information, each of which records the discovery of the Empty Tomb and various appearances of Jesus to those whom He had known. In addition to this we have the testimony of St. Paul as to the tradition of the Church in the early days of Christianity. Faced with this accumulation of evidence, a large body<sup>1</sup> of critical opinion accepts the fact that the Tomb was empty and that appearances of Jesus took place. But the connexion between these two events is not uncommonly represented as other than that which the Gospels state. The connexion between the two events which we find in the New Testament, and which the Christian Church has endorsed, is the simple one of the personal continuity of Jesus. The Tomb was empty, because He had left it; and He could appear to His disciples because He had left the Tomb. And the principal ground on which this reading of the evidence is rejected is the *a priori*

<sup>1</sup>e.g., Harnack, Streeter, Meyer. Professor Burkitt (*Christian Beginnings* pp. 76 ff.) is interesting and instructive as always, but does not speak upon the empty Tomb.

and non-historical ground that it involves belief in a "miracle." That is essentially a philosophical or theological point and I do not wish to dwell on it here. But it is worth noting what havoc such *apriorism* plays with the canons of historical enquiry. Not only does it involve setting aside evidence which on the main points is coherent and clear; it involves also the admission that no satisfactory alternative to the accepted view is in sight; and indeed no suggested rival theory has been able to stand for long the shafts of criticism.<sup>1</sup> I do not mean that the manner of Christ's passing from the grave is less mysterious to us than it ever has been; though modern views of the meaning of matter and its relation to spirit certainly make it easier to believe in such a transmutation of the Body of Jesus as the narrative in the Fourth Gospel suggests.<sup>2</sup> But the fact that Christ rose from the dead on the third day, in full continuity of body and soul, and passed into a mode of being admitting of new relationships with those who knew Him on earth—that fact seems as secure as historical evidence could make it.

The Ascension is in rather a different category from the Resurrection. Christ's actual rising from the dead is strictly in the nature of an inference—a necessary inference—from two well-attested facts of history: the fact of the Empty Tomb and the fact of His Appearances. There is much in these facts which we must leave unexplained, but they are none the less on the historical plane; they comprise experiences in which men saw and heard and handled, and told others who verified their reports. In the case of the Ascension, on the other hand, the fact recorded is a direct symbol of the truth, the symbolic element being predominant; while the experiences which verify it lie in another plane, outside the sphere of history proper. Opinions may differ as to whether or not the fact of the Ascension presented an instance of what scientists call "levitation" on the part of Jesus, or whether what the disciples saw may be

<sup>1</sup> Creighton's "aphorisms" (*Life* II. 330, 331) are peculiarly apposite on this point.

<sup>2</sup> See Latham, *The Risen Master*, a book still to be commended to all serious students.

explicable as an example of what the mystical writers call an "exterior vision." What is beyond doubt is that, from the time of the departure of Jesus on the slopes of Olivet, His disciples were sure that He had indeed ascended to the Father in Heaven, and resumed the glory which He had with Him before the creation. There was a finality in what had happened which would only find its analogue at the Last Day. He had been with them after the Resurrection in such wise as to re-establish the ascendancy often felt during His ministry and so grievously shattered at the Crucifixion. In His Ascension, this ascendancy was made absolute. He had departed from them and returned to the Father Who sent Him. That is why the fact recorded—the physical Ascension of Jesus into Heaven—must be regarded as mainly symbolic. That the disciples knew then, in this experience, that He had entered into a new mode of being, is a well-attested fact of history ; that Jesus entered then, and no earlier, into this new mode of being is perhaps a probable, though not a necessary, inference<sup>1</sup> ; but the essential significance of the fact has nothing to do, except as an accommodation to men's minds, with a going-up towards the sky. That had served its purpose when it had taught the transcendent truth that He had entered into glory.

But there is a further point to be considered. The assumption is sometimes made by Modernist theologians that the values of faith in the Resurrection are independent of any particular beliefs as to what befell Christ's Body. We may well admit, indeed, that the Creed commits men only to the fact that Christ rose again, and not to any particular view as to its historical details. Nevertheless those who believe that the Modernist interpretations involve the sacrifice of an element of real importance in the Resurrection Faith are bound to make their position clear. And the issue is found to go back, as so often, to what we mean by the Incarnation. So far as Christ's Resurrection is considered simply as providing an analogy for our

<sup>1</sup> I have in mind the fact that St. John apparently regards the Ascension as having occurred on the first Easter Day.

own,<sup>1</sup> the Modernist theory meets the case ; but it is out of place, if the Resurrection be regarded, as it should be, in relation to the whole context of Christ's incarnate life and activity on earth and in Heaven. And the Catholic Faith is not merely that the Son of God was made Man, and entered into the fulness of human experience, growing in stature and in character, suffering and dying in the body, and sharing the conditions of physical life : it asserts also that the identification of Himself with Man was carried through *in all its aspects* to a victorious issue. In other words, the Church believes not only in the condescension of God to become Man, but also in the assumption of Manhood into God ; not merely in Christ's survival of death, but in His conquest of it. In the early Church there was a danger of Christians falling into the notion that Christ's Godhead was not really united to His Manhood, but descended upon His Body at His Baptism and forsook it before the Death on the Cross ; the thought being that the Divine could not really die. The name for this view was Docetism.<sup>2</sup> To-day the danger is of a Docetism which applies not to the Crucifixion but to the Resurrection ; the Divine Christ forsakes His Body not before, but after, death ; the idea being that "body" is something which is out of keeping with the supernatural order. Both kinds of Docetism alike are ultimately inconsistent with the Incarnation. For that faith requires that the entire system of intrinsic relations which the Son of God assumed, should remain inviolate and unsevered through all the experiences of His incarnate condition—through the conquest of Death no less than through Death itself. And one essential element in that system is Christ's Body. To say that we can lop off, as it were, this element at His Death, and that the Resurrection will, nevertheless, be as real a fulfilment of the Incarnation as if the physical organism had part in it, is to make Christ's body an accident—one might almost say an irrelevance—in the economy of the Incarnation.

<sup>1</sup> Yet St. Paul makes it quite plain that the analogy is by no means complete (1 Cor. xv. 23, cf. also 1 John iii. 2). The point is important, as the completeness of the analogy is often assumed and made to govern the whole conception of Christ's Resurrection. cf. Canon Streeter's essay in *Foundations*.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, I. 258, 459.

### III. THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION AS SYMBOLS.

WHAT, then, do we mean by Christ's Risen and Ascended Life? Of what are the credal phrases symbolic?

I spoke above of the Resurrection and Ascension as marking Christ's entry upon a new mode of being. Of the two events, the latter is the more significant for our present purpose; for the Resurrection-life of Jesus, fundamental as it is in relation to history and to His life on earth, was yet temporary and transitional in nature. During those forty days Jesus manifested Himself to His disciples by many sensible proofs; He spoke, moved, appeared, vanished, in their sight and hearing. But whether this phase represents a mode of being in Christ as distinct from what was to follow as it was from what had preceded it, or whether it signifies a special and merciful activity on the part of the exalted Christ to meet the exigencies of the Church's faith at that crucial time, is a question not easily answered. On either view it is His Ascended Life which is of the greatest importance for Christian thought; for it is with that primarily that the life and experience of the Church have to do to-day. The faith of the Ascension is faith in what Jesus Christ is, and is doing, now. We are brought up to the consideration of what the Church means, when it says that He has ascended "into Heaven," and is "seated at the right hand of God."

(a) The fact that the Creeds represent this truth in language which is in part historical suggests that its meaning can in part be determined by reference to the conditions of Christ's Life while He was on earth. And there are, in fact, in His recorded utterances, and in the comments which at least one Evangelist has left us upon them, profound intimations of what the days of His flesh meant for Him, and what they portended afterwards. In addition to the repeated warnings as to His approaching Passion, Death, and Resurrection, there is the whole "eschatological" trend of His teaching about the Son of Man and the Kingdom.

Whether we regard the eschatological element in Christ's

teaching as having been originally much or little in proportion to the whole, it is not disputable that He predicted a manifestation of Himself in the near future which would be in striking contrast to His present estate. His words, and the form in which they are couched, portend, as we have already urged, a change from the conditions of successiveness which belong to human experience, to those of simultaneity, or "eternal life," which are the prerogative of God. But what is perhaps the most significant of all the words of Jesus in this regard is one that is not in an "eschatological" context. It is one of those passages whose very simplicity is full of meaning. "I have a baptism to be baptized with," He says, "and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"<sup>1</sup> The word for "accomplished" is the same as that which He uses when He cries on the Cross, "It is finished." It is the Cross which He has in mind. Until then He is "straitened." By what is He thus "cabin'd, cribb'd, confined"? The allusion cannot be to the outward circumstances of His Life; He was free to move where He would. No, these words come from the deepest levels of His experience. The cramping limitations which weigh upon Jesus here and which He will be free of at death, are the limitations of human life itself; the limitations of successiveness and distance, of time and space, which He took upon Him at His Incarnation, and which He will transcend only after He has tasted them to the full.

(b) A further and kindred intimation of the transcendent life which is to crown Christ's Incarnation lies in those two terms—Heaven and Glory—which are commonly used to express it. We shall perhaps best give meaning to these terms if we say that Heaven is the name which religion uses for the sphere of ultimate Reality, while Glory signifies the sphere of the Absolute Values; and the close connexion which obtains between the two metaphors is an index of the conviction, fundamental to Christian theism, that the worlds of Reality and of Value are not two, but one.

The use of "Heaven" in this metaphorical sense is much older than Christianity, and is perhaps Greek rather

<sup>1</sup> Luke xii. 50.

than Jewish ; for the Jews regarded heaven no less than earth as created in time and destined to perish in time. But no such idea can be imputed to Plato, when he describes the supra-sensible Ideas, which constitute for him the world of Reality, as "patterns laid up for us in Heaven." He is without question using the term symbolically ; and it is in this symbolic sense that the Church proclaims that Christ "ascended into Heaven." The meaning is that He is part of the ultimately real, abiding and unchanging order.

The idea of "Glory," on the other hand, is more distinctively Jewish. The term represents in their vocabulary the sum total of the Divine attributes in manifestation. It became a common synonym for the Divine Presence or *Shekinah*, which the Jew shrank from naming. By speaking of Christ as having entered into or returned into "glory," the Church means that the whole world of the Absolute Values is concentrated and manifested in Him. In the Fourth Gospel our Lord makes mention of two moments in His experience which will especially constitute His glorification, namely, the Cross and the Ascension. The glory of the Cross is ethical, shining forth in His Life of radiant holiness<sup>1</sup> and above all in the courage and self-devotion of His Death ; so that, when the traitor left the Supper in the Upper Room, Jesus could say, "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him."<sup>2</sup> But there is another kind of glory also which awaits Him. We may call it transcendental or personal. He goes on to speak of it at once. "If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him."<sup>3</sup> This is the proper and original prerogative of His Person as the only-begotten Son, the "glory which He had with the Father before the world was"<sup>4</sup> ; and the supreme expression of Christ's humility is when He prays that He may resume it. It is the glory of the Infinite Source of Goodness, Beauty, Power, Love, Truth. And the Ascension of our Lord means His re-entrance into the full and un-

<sup>1</sup> cf. St. John i. 14, xii. 23.

<sup>2</sup> ib. xiii. 32.

<sup>3</sup> St. John xiii. 31.

<sup>4</sup> ib. xvii. 5.

conditioned exercise of these attributes of Godhead. Henceforward He Who became, and is for ever, Man, is adored as sharing the wonder and awfulness of the Being of God. And He shares it now as Man. For "God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds ; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."<sup>1</sup>

(c) But there is yet a third set of terms in which our Lord and the Evangelists speak of the Ascended Life as the crown and fulfilment of the Incarnate. They are terms indicative of a new communicability between God and man, a richer and more vivid vouchsafing of His Presence on God's side, and a quicker realization of it upon man's. We should probably include in this category some at least of the "eschatological" sayings of Jesus, where truths of profound import, which we find transmuted into homely and concrete language by St. John,<sup>2</sup> are expressed in the rich imagery of apocalyptic phrasing. Allusion has already been made to the significance of the utterance of Jesus before Caiaphas—"From henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven"—and to its fulfilment in the vision of St. Stephen. Yet, as the Church soon found, it was not only in abnormal experiences like this, or like those which St. Paul sometimes describes, that the meaning of Christ's glorified Life was brought home to the Christian community. There was a more abiding Presence, a more serene Indwelling, made possible by the Ascension ; and this also—St. John says—Jesus had foretold. How far we have in the Fourth Gospel the *ipsissima verba* of the Master, and how far the mellow and balanced diction of these sayings represents

<sup>1</sup> Heb. i. 1-3.

<sup>2</sup> For the "transmuted eschatology" of St. John, cf. Streeter op. cit., Part III, ch. xvi.

the influence of long experience of their personal and practical meaning upon forms of expression originally "provincial" and obscure are questions which can probably never be answered. Nor, for those to whom the historic and the ascended Christ are one, are they of primary importance. Suffice it that no discontinuity, much less discrepancy, exists between what Jesus promised and what His disciples found Him to be ; and, whether in promise or in experience or in both, the Fourth Gospel bears witness to new ways in which through Christ's Ascension God became accessible to man.

For that is the theme to which, in different contexts and with varying shades of meaning, St. John again and again recurs. Now it is on the lips of Jesus directly promising His "coming," after His departure—a "coming," moreover, not of Himself only, but of the Father in Him and with Him. "If a man love me, he will keep my words : and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Or the promise is of the Spirit, Whom He will send—and Whose coming indeed will be Christ's own coming, a "seeing" of Him again, only more closely and more truly than before ; to make that possible, it is "expedient" that He should depart. Again, we find the Evangelist not merely recording the Lord's predictions of new illumination for the minds of His disciples but adverting repeatedly in his narrative to the fact that words or actions of Jesus only became intelligible after His Resurrection and Ascension. And yet again the transfiguration promised for Christ's own Person and work and for the minds of His disciples is to extend to the whole institutional aspect of religion too. There is to be a new and purified temple, a new and universal worship, new means of cleansing and of communion with God. In all these ways the one great truth is proclaimed that Christ's Risen and Ascended Life is to mediate the Presence and grace of God in measure far transcending that of the days of His Incarnate Ministry.

We are thus in a position to answer the question which stood at the head of this section. The truths symbolized by the dogma of the Ascension are truths both of Christ's

Person and of His Work. By saying that He is ascended into Heaven or exalted or glorified, the Church means that He has entered on a mode of being and experience which, without any abandonment of the intrinsic relations of Manhood, is yet freed from the limitations of time and space characteristic of man's life on earth. Still Man, moreover, He has entered the unseen and abiding world of Reality, and of Absolute Values. And, finally, there is established in Him and in His Name a union of man with God and a Presence of God with man more real, more definite, and more intimate than was known before.

#### IV.—THE ASCENDED LORD AND THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

Christianity, it has been observed, is fundamentally "incarnational." The statement means that behind all its thoughts of God and of man, its worship and prayers, its redemptive and missionary work, there is the underlying idea of God as One who has uniquely revealed Himself in a human life, that of Jesus Christ. The Christian faith is thus distinguished from the pure transcendentalism of religions like Islam or philosophies like Deism, as well as from the various forms of immanentism which seem to be, both in East and West alike, its more stubborn rivals. Incarnational religion is belief in the transcendent made immanent, signally and causatively in the Person of Christ, but really, though derivatively, also in the lives of all who believe in Him. And because this faith is centred in a Person who is at once human and Divine, we have the guarantee—which nothing else, so far as we can guess, could give us—that God is Love. That, after all, is the central dogma of Christianity, its ultimate and fundamental belief. And it is peculiar to Christianity. Neither the eroticism of the Sufi mystics of Persia, nor the *amor intellectualis Dei* of Spinoza, comes near to echoing what Christianity means by the Love of God. For that Love, as we know it in Christ, transfigures every moment of human experience, and yet is never exhausted in it: its only perfect echo in human history is the Cross.

To insist that the Christian conception of God and of God's Presence is incarnational is not to disesteem those other Divine activities and self-manifestations which cannot be so described. The incarnational is not the enemy, but the crown and complement, of the immanent. Perhaps the most tragic consequence of the conditions which gave rise to the Reformation has been the growing divorce in Christendom between the two aspects of human life. Art, science, and government had to struggle for emancipation, where the Church should have recognized an autonomy dependent only upon the creative will of God; and the post-Tridentine Roman Church has not yet come to terms with the immanent Logos or Reason in human society. In England wiser counsels have ensured a balance which, if it sometimes sinks into regrettable forms of compromise, has at least done much to sanctify civilization as well as to make religion reasonable; and the principles on which this measure of success has been achieved may rightly be regarded as indispensable in any theological synthesis which aims at completeness.

(a) We shall note that each of the three modes of God's incarnational Presence which Catholic theology has distinguished has its immanent analogue; but it is with these modes themselves, with the types of religious experience which they account for, and with their doctrinal basis, that we are here concerned. Priority belongs to the Spiritual Presence—the presence of God's Spirit in the soul of the Christian believer. From the most primitive times it would appear that man has been conscious of a "numinous" element in his experience. He has felt it in his experience of nature, of birth and death, of his fellow men; and it is particularly the prerogative of kings and priests and seers. No doubt a long process of evolution lies between these rudimentary intimations of the spiritual and such experiences as are represented by the *δαιμόνιον τι* of Socrates, or the voices and visions of a Jacob or a Moses; but we cannot to-day draw a hard and fast line between them, saying "This is," or "This is not," due to the Spirit of God. Even in the case of the prophets, the *differentia*

between false and true did not lie on the surface. Nevertheless a peculiar place must be reserved for the prophets of Israel in the development of religious experience. The Presence of God of which they discourse is not so much in Person as in "Word" or "Spirit." But some at least of them are convinced that a closer and more personal Presence will be vouchsafed, and that, when it is, the same Spirit of God which is upon them will be upon Him who comes. This conception of God is not yet incarnational; but it is preparatory thereto. Only when the Christ has come, however, and not only come but ascended into glory, can we speak of the Spiritual Presence of God in the full Christian sense. It has often been pointed out that St. Paul seems careless as to any distinction between "Christ" and "the Spirit" in the heart of the believer. It is Christ as and in "the Spirit," and the Father in and with Christ, who speaks in the conscience, quickens motive, helps in prayer. This is the Christ with Whom the primitive Church has specially to do: He is God become amazingly real, vivid, close. Critics have often observed the difference of atmosphere which seems to distinguish the Synoptic Gospels from the Epistles or from the Johannine writings: and they have based on it elaborate arguments to show how the primitive community overlaid the simple Gospel of Jesus. But the true clue lies in four words of St. John, when he explains Christ's offer to quench the thirst of all who believed in Him as referring to the period after Pentecost: "for not yet was Spirit." We have in the Synoptic Gospels a faithful representation of that period in the story of the Incarnation before Christ was known in the Spirit. This very fact, indeed, may account for much in the Synoptic Gospels that baffles our comprehension. For the Christ of the Synoptic Gospels is not the whole Christ, nor even the whole Christ of history. It was one and the same Jesus Christ also who gave the Spirit, and came in the Spirit, and indwelt His people with the Presence of God. That was what St. John well knew; and in the light of that knowledge he wrote what Clement called "the spiritual Gospel"—the Gospel, that is to say, of Jesus as He was found to be in the life of the Spirit.

And the link between the two phases of Christ's activity and Presence was the Ascension.

(b) It is a mark of the Spiritual Presence that it is inward and particular; its sanctuary is in the individual soul, which it kindles and illumines. But man is a "social animal." The totem-cults and initiations and tabus which abound in the tribal lore of primeval or still savage man; the *pietas* which surrounded the *Lares* and *Penates* of the Roman family; the solemn ritual with which the Greek celebrated the patron god or goddess of his *polis*, or inaugurated the pan-Hellenic games at Nemea or Olympus—all these attest the conviction that there was something "numinous" in the functioning of the great social institutions of humanity. No one has voiced this belief more broadly than St. Paul, when he writes, "The powers that be are ordained of God;" and the Divine vocation of the State has been asserted by a long line of statesmen, reformers, and thinkers from Augustine to Dante, from Marsiglio to Jefferson, from Grotius to Burke and Mazzini. This immanental Presence of God in civic institutions is the analogue of what Catholic theology distinguishes in religion as His Mystical Presence. Various metaphors are used to describe the Church in this "numinous" aspect. It is a "city," a "household" of God, a "new Israel," a "Temple," a "body," a "royal priesthood," a "kingdom." It was of this, while still only in germ, that Jesus said to the Pharisees, "the kingdom of heaven is among you": on this thought that St. Paul wrote the most eloquent and finished of all his letters: this that the Seer of Patmos described in the superb imagery of the new Jerusalem. Perhaps its richest expression, however, is in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where its scope is extended to include the great host of the faithful departed. Those things in the giving of the Old Dispensation—the cloud and fire and smoke on Sinai, the trumpet's blare, the thunder and lightning—which have appealed so forcibly to writers like Dean Stanley, this author deliberately lays aside. We have not come to them, he says; they belong to the order that is superseded; but "ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the

living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”<sup>1</sup>

The doctrine of “The Communion of Saints” is the credal summary of this sublime conception of the Christian life as life in a Body, and a Body so permeated by the Divine Presence that the barrier between the living and the departed has ceased to be of moment. And it is a doctrine that has the sure warrant of experience. It is the Mystical Presence of God which gives to the Christian home its gracious and sweetening influence, which hallows friendship, which makes of education in school or college not only an illumination but an initiation. The circle widens ; and we find this “leaven” of the kingdom working in human society and moulding public opinion through the work and witness of Christian societies and groups. We know it in that delicate thing which we call “tone” or atmosphere, which is the salt of morality and the mainstay of vision. Overleaping the barriers of distance, it binds together in spiritual loyalty those whom life’s adventure or the call of Christ separates from the Mother land and Church. And finally in this Presence we reach out in faith and prayer to find mysterious contact with the departed, joined with them in the unseen bond of mutual intercession and in a common work of thanksgiving prayer and praise.

There was a saying among the Jews of our Lord’s day that “where two or three are gathered together for the reading of the Torah, the Shekinah is in the midst of them”; and the sentence is an illustration of the sense of God’s Mystical Presence in Israel which finds its classical expression in the Psalms and the prophetic writings. The very idea of Zion suggested to the Jew the Lord in the midst of her. Jesus was familiar with this element of experience in institutional religion, and the value He set on it may be measured by the deference He enjoined upon His disciples

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii. 22-4.

towards its duly constituted guardians, even when their conduct belied their office. But He went further. He had come to fulfil the Law and the Prophets and to build a new Temple ; and He claims therefore to attach to Himself, and so to fertilize and irrigate anew, this element of religion. Being Himself the Shekinah—that is, the Presence and Glory—of God, He says, “ Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.” And the early Fathers loved to echo this thought. “ Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there let the people be ; even as where Jesus may be, there is the universal Church,” writes Ignatius ; and Irenæus, “ Ubi ecclesia ibi et Spiritus Dei ; et ubi Spiritus Dei, illic ecclesia et omnis gratia.”

It is manifest that this Presence of Jesus in the faithful could only be realized after He had been released from the straitening conditions of His Incarnate Ministry—that is to say, after the Ascension. And it is in this context that we shall best grasp the significance of that activity of His ascended Life which the writer to the Hebrews describes as His heavenly Priesthood. Much of this Epistle is lost to us owing to our ingrained habit of thinking of heaven as a distant place, instead of as that sphere and mode of Christ’s being from which distance is excluded. Once realize that Christ “ in heaven ” means Christ able to interpenetrate man’s life, and His High Priesthood becomes a necessity of our faith. A man may say that he needs no priest, for he can go directly to God by himself ; but let him think of himself as a member of a spiritual Body, and as approaching God in the way that Jesus taught, with the words “ Our Father ” on his lips, and he will find a new complexion put upon the matter. When he says “ Our Father,” he not only needs a priest, he becomes one. And if he allows himself some further thought on what this means, on the vast solidarity of human worship of which he becomes the mouthpiece, and on the littleness of his own capacity for such a task, then the thought of Christ’s universal Priesthood will become the sheet-anchor of his devotional life. To know that One is at hand who can point aright the dim gropings of his soul, who can bear every burden of his

heart, who can interpret his silences and halting words, and take his cold and unimaginative prayers into the infinite energy and abiding warmth of His own intercessions ; who, above all, can plead as His own the atoning Sacrifice by which we have access in one Spirit to the Father ;—to know that is surely to banish half the uncertainties that chill the soul's worship, and to come before God with that “boldness” which St. John asserts to be the peculiar privilege of the Christian believer.

(c) Catholic thought has distinguished yet a third way in which God, as Jesus Christ reveals and mediates Him, comes to dwell with men and enters into human experience. He comes in the Holy Spirit to the heart of each believer : He comes in the whole Body of the faithful to strengthen each member and to leaven the world: He comes also in and through particular objects of the physical and visible order. Few truths of our religion have suffered so disastrously from the distortions and misunderstandings of controversy as this of Christ's Sacramental Presence ; and yet few have a surer warrant in religious experience or make a wider appeal to the hearts of men. Into the historical causes of this anomaly I need not here enter. In part they are dealt with elsewhere in this volume : while the development of two great branches of science, Anthropology and Psychology, has put a new complexion on many of the issues around which dispute has turned in the past. My purpose here is to vindicate the belief in this mode of God's Presence as a belief which rests on experience and which coheres with a rational theology.

The idea that the Presence of God is connected with particular places and things is one that seems to be almost universal in religion. Professor Otto has coined the term “numinous” for those “moments” of experience which are represented by this idea. The term covers a type of experience which, like the motions of the moral consciousness or of the æsthetic sense, is *sui generis* ; and it involves particularly the awakening of the sentiments of awe, wonder, self-abasement or creatureliness, and irresistible fascination. The objects that awaken this experience, whether persons

or ideas or things, can equally be called "numinous"; and he insists that we have no more right to attribute the supernatural significance with which they are charged to pure subjectivism than we are entitled to regard the beauty of an object as due solely to the minds of those who think it so. At the same time the "numinous" has intimate connexion with the moral and with the æsthetic. We may trace its connexion with the moral, for instance, in the ritual and formulæ associated with oaths and covenants, and with the æsthetic in the offering which Horace planned for the *fons Bandusiae* or in the stones sacred to Coventina, goddess of running streams, which the Roman legionaries set up around their stations on Hadrian's Wall. And the sense of the "numinous" shows no signs of decay in modern civilization. The churchyard of an English village is still a "numinous" place, and the cenotaph in Whitehall a "numinous" object no less than were Stonehenge and Carnac to neolithic man; and it is not merely courtesy or custom that makes us dispense with our hats when we enter "Jordans" Meeting-house or Westminster Abbey. These things, these spots, are holy: they bring us into the Presence of God.

The Jews were no strangers to this element of religion, though in their case it is purified by the ethical monotheism which was, or which increasingly became, its background. The altars and tombs and pillars of the patriarchs, Sinai and Gerizim and Zion, the Tabernacle and the Temple, attest the places and occasions of men's keeping tryst with God. Above all, the Ark with the Mercy-Seat, over which brooded the unseen glory of His abiding Presence, was, for later generations as for earlier, the central hearth of this experience and belief.

The Jewish attitude towards the Ark is thus described by Prof. A. B. Davidson<sup>1</sup>:

"So far as His (Jehovah's) dwelling among the people was concerned, He abode in the Ark. The Ark of the Covenant is not to be conceived as an idol, or as an image

<sup>1</sup> *Old Testament Theology*, p. 112. cf. also Ps. xi. 4, "The Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord's seat is in heaven."

of God. No deity could be represented in the form of a small chest. But neither is it enough to say that the Ark was a symbol of Jehovah, whatever that might mean, or a symbol of His Presence. It was more than that. Jehovah's Presence was attached to it. It was in some sense His dwelling-place. But although it was so, and the people had thus an assurance that He was present among them in some special sense, His Presence was not confined to the Ark. . . . Everywhere in the old histories as well as in the prophetic writings, the supersensuous abode of Jehovah, and His condescension, nevertheless, and entrance into the life of man, were both well understood."

Various causes make this case particularly instructive for our present purpose. The Presence might fairly be called a "local" Presence; God was "there" in a peculiar way; yet there was no materializing, nor even localizing of the Deity; He still rode upon the wings of the winds, and shaped the great movements of history, and dwelt with him that was of an humble spirit. The affinity with what the Church means by the sacramental Presence of Christ in the Eucharist is obvious. Here too there is asserted a Presence of God which is genuine and real, which is "attached to" visible objects, and which yet in no way detracts from His Presence in Nature or in the Church or in the faithful heart. No less obvious, it should be said, and no less instructive, are the differences. They are summed up in the fact that the Presence or Shekinah in the case of the Ark was, as I have said, "local"; whereas Catholic theology teaches repeatedly that this may not be predicated of the Sacramental Presence. The consideration of this divergence will take us far towards the principles underlying the Christian conception. As we might expect, the root of the matter lies in the Incarnation. Christ could not, if His religion was to be at once centred in His own Divine-human Personality and universal in its reach-out to all mankind, associate it in any fundamental sense with individual places or things. Yet the truth represented by the Ark and the Shekinah—the truth of God brought

near to His people through something in the physical and sensible order—was one that required recognition, and required it indeed more than ever, in an incarnational religion. The types and shadows were superseded ; but it was that the reality might be fulfilled. The New Testament writers use language which showed that they found this fulfilment both in the Person of the Incarnate Son Himself, and in the Church, “the temple of His body.” Yet this was not the whole truth.

The Church was not strictly an object in the external order ; and the conditions of His Incarnate Life, which permitted men to see and hear and handle Him, were not permanent. What was needed was some provision which would maintain the concreteness and definiteness characteristic of the Shekinah in the Holy of Holies, and yet dispense with all that was local and national in that mode of conceiving the Divine Presence and Power. And the *rationale* of the Christian sacraments and of the Eucharist in particular is precisely that they fulfil that rôle. They are the analogue in incarnational religion of what immanent or prophetic faiths had striven to express through the individual place or object and the “local” Presence. For the individual object is substituted the typical object—water or bread and wine ; for the individual place, the place, wherever it be, which affords environment to the Christian Mysteries —altar or font or aumbry ; for the “local” Presence the Sacramental.

But what is the ground in Reality of this experience of the Divine Presence ? What is its relation to the rest of our knowledge of God and of His dealings with man ? Two, and only two types of answer seem to be possible. The first, which I mention in order to reject, is that which explains it by reference to what is called Divine Immanence. I do not mean that this doctrine is not true ; but it is not adequate. The conception of a Divine Spirit present and operative in the whole physical order, so nobly voiced in a whole line of poets from Virgil to Blake and Wordsworth, is one that is fundamental also to the thought of the Hebrew Psalmists and Prophets, and finds rich expression in the

Wisdom Literature of the Jews. But it does not suffice to account for the experience of the Christian as he comes to the Sacraments. The Spirit which "inwardly nourishes" the mechanism of Nature and is so "deeply interfused" with the manifold activities and the affairs of men is essentially anonymous. It is revealed as a supernatural Reality, but not as a Person ; it is not incarnational, not redemptive. We must know God's Name, before we can speak properly of His Presence. It is not in *a* Will, but in *His* Will, that is our peace. We are thrown back therefore upon lines of interpretation that start from the Person of Christ. It is His ordinance, His living and abiding Word, His ever-potent Will—that, and not the intrinsic supernatural relations of the sensible world—which makes the Sacraments what they are. In other words we are brought back not only to the Incarnate, but to the Ascended, Christ. The Church, in celebrating the Mysteries, is not simply carrying out the last command of a dying and departing Lord : she is taking part in an activity which finds its whole ground in His risen and ascended Life. "Touch me not," He said to Mary, "for I am not yet ascended. . . ." Does not this mean that when He is ascended, there will be a contact with Him for those who love Him, infinitely more real and vivid—and still capable of sensible expression—than any that had been experienced in the days of His flesh ?

One further point should be mentioned in connexion with the Sacramental Presence. Wherever the New Testament writers speak of Baptism or the Eucharist, they refer them particularly to Christ's Death. What is given, that is to say, for our appropriation and fellowship is His sacrificed and surrendered Life. This is not to dissociate the Sacraments from His ascended Life, but to emphasize a special element in it. It is the element dimly expressed in such phrases as "the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world," and "crucifying Christ afresh." We might describe it as the eternal Victim-hood which is the correlative of the eternal Priesthood. This is the one form in which the New Testament hints at suffering as having an abiding place in the Godhead ; though the idea is fairly common in

the Old Testament. Theology must be mainly silent before a mystery from which the curtain has been so little drawn aside : but a reverent mysticism may perhaps ask whether there may not be in the mind of our ascended Lord that which corresponds to memory in man ; and whether the Cross may not be for Him now a permanent potentiality of sensitiveness, which man's sin can quicken into pain and his faith and love transfigure into the joy of the Lord.

#### V.—THE PRESENCE AT THE END.

This chapter would not be complete without reference to that final activity and Presence of the Ascended Lord to which the Church looks forward as to the End of all things. All these modes of God's Presence of which we have spoken are but for a time. The Spirit in our hearts is, to use St. Paul's phrase, no more than an "earnest" or first instalment of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Mystical Presence in the Church is but a foretaste of that unclouded vision of Him and His saints which awaits us. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him ; for we shall see Him as He is." We celebrate the Holy Communion only "till He come." It is for this last Coming, and for this alone, that the Apostolic writers seem to reserve the word *Parousia* or "Presence."

Amid the many and varied speculations upon this last function of the Ascended Christ to which the obscure imagery of the Scriptural allusions to it has given rise, one or two substantive points may be picked out as representing what seems to be the Church's general mind on the matter. That time and space as we know and measure them are not ultimately real ; that they and the whole physical order derive their significance from the fact of conditioning a state of probation for human souls ; that the spiritual and moral processes to which man lends himself here contain in themselves decisive and irreversible possibilities ; that each and all will in the end stand transparent in the undimmed Light and Truth of God's Presence ; and that the

destiny of every soul will be determined by the judgment of the Son of Man—these things seem to be part and parcel of any Christian and Catholic faith. We see through a glass darkly. Yet to have this faith and trembling hope is to feel as Abraham did before Sodom, and as Moses did on Sinai, and as Saul on the way to Damascus. It is to realize at once the awful solemnity and the infinite bliss of every mode and moment in which God in Christ draws near to our frailty now ; and so to cling to these and use them and abide in them that, when He shall be manifested as our Judge, we may be counted worthy to enter into His Kingdom.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SUPERNATURAL BASIS OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

We are told that, historically considered, the *Imitatio* is to be viewed as a final summary of the moral wisdom of Catholicism ; that it is a picture of men's moral nature ; that it continually presents personal moral improvements as the first and constant aim for every individual. I do not say that any of this is untrue, but is moral the right word ? Is not the sphere of these famous meditations the spiritual rather than the moral life, and their aim the attainment of holiness rather than moral excellence ? As, indeed, another writer under the same head better expresses it, is not their inspiration "the yearning for perfection—the consolation of the life out of self ?" By holiness do we not mean something different from virtue ? It is not the same as duty : still less is it the same as religious belief. It is a name for an inner grace of nature, an instinct of the soul, by which, though knowing of earthly appetites and worldly passions, the Spirit, purifying itself of these, and independent of all argument, and the fierce struggles of the will, dwells in living, patient, and confident communion with the seen and the unseen God. In this region, not in ethics, moves the *Imitatio*.—LORD MORLEY.

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When we speak of obedience, of the new man, of the True Light, the True Love, or the Life of Christ, it is all the same thing, and where one of these is, there are they all, and where one is wanting, there is none of them, for they are all one in truth and substance.—THEOLOGIA GERMANICA.

THE Christian Church exists to witness to, and to co-operate with, the action of God. Its chief *raison d'être* is that it is endowed with supernatural life through that participation in Christ, both God and Man, which is effected by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit ; and this endowment it holds, not for itself only, but for communication to the whole world. This endowment is matter of experience. When Jesus said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you,"<sup>1</sup> He meant that the supernatural order of Divine grace was within the experience of His hearers. Immanent in their experience of Him and His teaching was the

<sup>1</sup> Luke xvii. 21. This is Dalman's translation, based on the supposed Aramaic underlying ἐντὸς ἕμῶν. It is confirmed by the Sahidic Coptic ("inside you")—cf. *The Coptic Version of N. T.*

Transcendent to which all who had eyes to see and ears to hear could commit themselves, if they would. The community already gathered round Jesus in Galilee was the home of this experience, and in that sense was the salt of the earth, the light of the world, a city set on a hill. And its expansion was rapid like the growth of the mustard-seed, and discursive like leaven in the lump.

But while Jesus spoke thus of the Kingdom of God as already present during His ministry, the general tenor of His teaching is to focus attention on its establishment in the near future, implying that some far richer and more vivid experience of the Supernatural was in store. It was the conviction of the first age of Christians that this actually occurred; and they dated it from Pentecost. This is not to say that Pentecost can be isolated from Christ's Death, Resurrection, and Ascension even as a proximate fulfilment of His predictions of the Kingdom; still less to say that the dispensation of the Spirit exhausts the meaning of those predictions. St. Paul, indeed, is careful to insist that the Spirit is an "earnest," or first instalment of the Kingdom whose plenitude is as yet unrealized on earth. But, when these reservations have been made, it is difficult to exaggerate the emphasis placed by the Apostolic writers upon the Holy Spirit as the cause and mediator of a new and decisive moment in the experience of the Supernatural.

The conception of the Church which brings out most clearly the supernatural experience underlying it is that expressed in the metaphor of the New Creation, with its cognates Regeneration and Renewal. When first it meets us in the Bible, it is probably little more than metaphor, as when Ezekiel (xlvii. 8-11) or Zechariah (xiv. 8) symbolizes the revival of spiritual religion under the figures of "the tree of life," and the river that "went out of Eden" (cf. Gen. ii. 9-14), or Deutero-Isaiah (lxv. 17, 18; lxvi. 22) depicts the restoration of Israel from Babylon in the poetical imagery of "new heavens and a new earth." But, as time passed, ideas, which had begun as metaphor, became doctrine. The deep-seated pessimism so characteristic of

Greek poetry in its deepest intuitions<sup>1</sup> had its counterpart in Jewish thought, after Alexander had brought it into the main stream of Western civilization ; and though Judaism must needs teach that " the earth abideth for ever " (Eccl. i. 4), the conviction tended more and more to establish itself that the whole created universe was honeycombed with corruption (*φθορά*) and that it must all be changed, if and when the Divine Sovereignty came again into its own. When St. Paul wrote, " The fashion of the world passeth away," he was voicing one of the most universal beliefs of civilized antiquity.

Jewish monotheism compensated for this pessimism in a way impossible to paganism by its belief that God, Who had often acted in the past, would act again for the deliverance of His people. The world would be destroyed, but He would create another. The prominence of this idea in the apocryphal and apocalyptic literature<sup>2</sup> accounts for the fact that it seems to be taken for granted in the language of Christ<sup>3</sup> and His Apostles.<sup>4</sup> It plays, moreover, a large part in the vision of the Last Things described by the Seer of Patmos (Rev. xxi. 1, xxii. 5). For him the consummation of history means the fulfilment of the Isaianic prophecy of a new heaven and a new earth, with the new Jerusalem as the centre, to which all nations come to worship and make offering. All sorrow and pain are banished, and the Holy City is a place of divine glory, light, and joy. In the midst is " a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb " (xxii. 1, cf. vii. 17, xxi. 6, xxii. 17), and on either side of this river is " the tree of life " (xxii. 2)—two features which indicate the restoration of Eden. And the mark of this New Creation is a new relation between God and man, so that henceforth those who inherit it shall be God's " sons " (xxi. 7) or " peoples " (xxi. 3), and God Himself " will dwell with them."

The Seer's vision of the New Creation is of a cosmic

<sup>1</sup> cf. Sophocles, O.C. 1225 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Wisd. xvi.-xix ; Enoch xci. 16, xlvi. 4, 5, lxxii. 1 ; Jubilees i. 29, iv. 26 ; 2 Bar. lvii. 2, xliv. 12, xxxii. 6 ; 4 Ezra, vii. 75, 70.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xix. 28 ; cf. Matt. xxiv. 35.

<sup>4</sup> Acts iii. 19-21 ; cf. 2 Peter iii. 8-13.

event still future, though it is coloured constantly by his experience of what the Christian life already is. In the Epistles the balance of emphasis is reversed, and the New Creation is assumed and taught as a fact of experience rather than of expectation, a doctrine of man rather than of the world. The focus of interest lies in God's creative act as seen and known in human society and human souls. Not that the regenerative process is thought of as ending there. Though it begins with the microcosm of single souls, it "does not cease its effectual working till it has embraced the whole macrocosm of the universe."<sup>1</sup> But our own concern here is with the religion of experience; and it is as a description of that experience that the teaching of the New Testament writers about the New Creation claims our especial attention.

The central figure in this New Creation and its life-giving principle is Jesus Christ. This is the unanimous doctrine of the Apostolic writers, though they express it in different ways. Thus St. Paul contrasts the first man Adam who became a living soul with the last Adam, the second man, who was from Heaven—that is, supernatural—and became a life-giving spirit; and these two, Adam and Christ, stand as heads and representatives of the two orders of life, the natural and the supernatural, to which their several followers belong (I Cor. xv. 45-48). A similar contrast between Christ, the Lord of the new or spiritual creation, and Adam, the lord of the first or natural creation, seems to underlie the great passage in the Epistle to the Philippians about the Incarnation; where the "equality with God," which Adam clutched at, and Christ refused, is best explained by reference to the story of the temptation in Genesis.<sup>2</sup> No less clear is the teaching of St. John. For him Christ sums up in Himself the creative activities of God. He is the Word, through Whom all things came into being, the Light, and the Life; and to those who received Him, He gave the right to become by regeneration "children of

<sup>1</sup> Archbishop Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, p. 61. The whole passage (pp. 58-64) is most instructive.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. ii. 6. Gen. iii. 5, 6.

God.”<sup>1</sup> He is the Source of the supernatural life<sup>2</sup>; and it is His breathing of the Spirit upon His disciples after the Resurrection which brings the new Humanity into being as a like breath of God quickened the first man in the beginning.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the doctrine that Christ is the proximate Giver of the Spirit, who is the constitutive principle of the new order, belongs as much to the earliest as to the latest *strata* of New Testament teaching; for His promises recorded in the Fourth Gospel that “rivers of living water” should assuage the thirst of all who believed in Him,<sup>4</sup> and that He would send the Holy Spirit,<sup>5</sup> are explicitly claimed by St. Peter to have been fulfilled at Pentecost, when Jesus “being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost . . . poured forth this, which ye see and hear.”<sup>6</sup>

This New Creation by Christ through the Spirit involves at once a creative act and a creative process. The creative act is spoken of as due to God’s “Word,” by which He has begotten or re-begotten us (Jas. i. 18, 1 Pet. i. 23); and the moment of the Divine action or utterance is identified particularly with baptism (Eph. v. 26, Tit. iii. 5). For it is a cleansing act, involving the decisive “putting off” of the old humanity with its corruptness, anger, and deceit (Eph. iv. 22, Col. iii. 9), and an equally decisive “putting on” of the new humanity (Eph. iv. 24, Col. iii. 10), which is Christ Himself (Gal. iii. 27).<sup>7</sup> And the effect of this act is to re-constitute man in Christ (Eph. ii. 15), and so achieve a “new creation,” for which old things have passed away and all is made new, and where the age-long barriers of nationality and social status have ceased any longer to be significant for religion (2 Cor. v. 17, Gal. vi. 15). This is that re-birth “of water and spirit,” without which a man cannot enter the Kingdom of God (John iii. 1-8). At the same time that act initiates a process to be carried on by

<sup>1</sup> John i. 1-14, viii. 12, xi. 25.

<sup>2</sup> John v. 21 f.

<sup>3</sup> John xx. 22. cf. Gen. ii. 7. The rare word *ἐμφυσάν* occurs in both passages.

<sup>4</sup> John vii. 38, 39.

<sup>5</sup> John xvi. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Acts ii. 33.

<sup>7</sup> cf. Rom. xiii. 14. The decisiveness of the act involved is well brought out in all these cases by the “baptismal aorists.” cf. also 1 Cor. vi. 11.

the Holy Spirit. The characteristic term for this process is Renewal, a word which lies close to the conception of the "new man" put on by Christians. Indeed it is this "new man" or "inner man" which is constantly and continuously being renewed into a fuller consciousness of and likeness to Christ (2 Cor. iv. 16, Col. iii. 10), through the agency of the Holy Ghost (Tit. iii. 5). In one passage of singular beauty, St. Paul attributes this change to the concentration of the mind's attention upon Christ, though he is careful to note that it is Christ as the Spirit whose glory is reflected back into us as into a mirror.<sup>1</sup> And the result of this reflection of Christ's glory in us is a radical change in the essential structure of our being<sup>2</sup>; so that, through the renewal of our conscious mind and motive, the deepest elements of our personality are more and more assimilated to the pattern of Christ.<sup>3</sup>

Various metaphors are used in the New Testament to express the distinction between the Church and secular society. Christians were "once darkness, but are now light in the Lord" (Eph. v. 8); once asleep and dead, but now awakened and made alive (Eph. v. 14, ii. 1). By natural heredity from Adam, men are of the earth earthy, and they speak the things of the earth; by re-creation at Christ's hands, they are heavenly, and able to bear the image of Supernature (1 Cor. xv. 47-49, John iii. 31). The world has its own spirit (1 Cor. ii. 12, 1 John iv. 4, 5) with its own characteristic attitude to life and expression of it; but Christians, in the world though not of it, have in them a Spirit of stronger mettle, because proceeding from God.

That is the general statement of the issue; but its particular statement in terms of psychology and ethics is not less pregnant with the contrast between Nature and Supernature. The essential mark of the Christian, when fully developed, is that he is "spiritual." This is a word whose meaning in the New Testament it has been possible in recent times to fix with some precision.<sup>4</sup> It means a

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 16-18.

<sup>2</sup> μεταμορφοῦσθε cannot mean less than this in Rom. xii. 2. and 2 Cor. iii. 18. cf. Plummer *in loc.* <sup>3</sup> Rom. xii. 2.

<sup>4</sup> See Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, pp. 202 ff., 222 ff.

man inspired or seized by a spirit. The belief that men were so inspired was common in antiquity, and the fact was certified by acknowledged signs, such as prophecy, visions, ecstatic utterance, powers of healing, etc. Indeed, St. Paul's difficulty at Corinth was not so much to secure credence for this supernatural endowment as to provide some means of discriminating between Divine and diabolic inspiration. Eventually the test recommended both by him and by St. John is the confession of faith in Jesus as Lord and truly Incarnate (1 Cor. xii. 3, 1 John iv. 2). The Christian, at any rate, is "spiritual" because he is inspired by the Spirit of God; and it is by virtue of having received that Spirit that Christians have knowledge of God (1 Cor. ii. 10, 11). That powerful Divine agency—that, and not eloquence or skilful dialectic—is what St. Paul presents palpably and unmistakably to the consciousness of his hearers (1 Cor. ii. 4, 5), and it is their experience of that which is the determining factor in their lives.

The impact of the supernatural Spirit upon the human personality is to awaken a kindred element, namely, the spirit of man<sup>1</sup>, which is dormant until He comes. Left to themselves, men are by nature mere flesh and blood, human animals. In this natural state, they cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. xv. 50). Even in the early stages of the converted life, they are still "fleshy" (1 Cor. iii. 1), full of natural propensities which, if gratified, make them in the ethical sense "carnal" (1 Cor. iii. 3), as when they give way to jealousy and strife.<sup>2</sup> And in such a condition they cannot receive more than the rudiments of Christian instruction. More common as the psychological rather than the ethical opposite of "spiritual" in St. Paul's writings is the term "psychic" or "animal," translated in our English version "natural" (1 Cor. ii. 14, xv. 46, cf. Jude 19). The "natural" man is he whose life and mind are dominated by the constitutive principle of the living organism *qua* organism, viz., the *psyche*. To him the

<sup>1</sup> cf. 1 Cor. ii. 11, Rom. viii. 10, 16.

<sup>2</sup> This seems to be the meaning of the distinction between *σαρκίνος* and *σαρκικός*, cf. Robertson and Plummer *in loc.*

dynamic energy of the Christian faith is ridiculous ; he can make nothing of it ; it is something wholly outside his experience (1 Cor. ii. 14). Only the Christian, who has the Spirit of God, is endowed with the capacity for discerning such things.

And these two types of man—the natural man and the spiritually awakened man—have their corresponding manifestations in moral character. The former follows the lust of the flesh, and exhibits its works—impurity, superstition, and every kind of strife and loose living ; the latter shows “the fruit of the spirit”—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance (Gal. v. 16-26). It is the mind of Christ reproducing itself (1 Cor. ii. 16, Phil. ii. 5), through the agency of the Spirit in Christians which distinguishes them from the world ; His meekness, sonship, freedom, love for men, are communicated to them (Gal. iv. 5-6, John viii. 36, 2 Cor. v. 14, John xvii. 20-26). And so they stand out in a society deeply scarred by corruption and self-interest “as lights in the world” (Phil. ii. 15), distinct in motive and habits of conduct, raised above man’s judgment and the standards of legality, and bearing the promise of an infinitely glorious future both for themselves and for all mankind.

The theory which will best enable us to understand this New Testament doctrine of the Christian moral life as grounded in the experience of the Supernatural is that which regards character as determined pre-eminently by the growth and formation of the sentiments<sup>1</sup>. A sentiment, in this modern psychological sense, is an organized system of emotional tendencies centred in the idea of some object. A group of emotions which appears fundamental to all strong sentiments comprises fear, anger, joy, and sorrow, and these four emotions are innately connected<sup>2</sup>. In love, for example, which is a highly composite sentiment, we feel fear lest the object of our love suffer or misunderstand,

<sup>1</sup> See Shand, *The Foundations of Character*, esp. pp. 35-128 ; MacDougall, *Introduction to Social Psychology*, ch. v. vi. R. H. Thouless, *An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion*, ch. vii.

<sup>2</sup> Shand, op. cit., p. 38. MacDougall does not allow that joy and sorrow are properly emotions.

anger at anyone who menaces or harasses that object, joy in its presence, and sorrow in its absence. And love for some object or other is the most universal of all human sentiments. Aristotle enunciates this truth in the opening sentence of his *Ethics*, when he says that all human action of whatsoever kind seems to aim at some good. The commonest focus of men's emotional tendencies is the idea of the self, round which is formed self-love or the self-regarding sentiment. But joined to this are a number of disinterested sentiments, and it is the strength and variety of these which account for the degree of civilization reached by any society. Such are conjugal and parental love, *esprit de corps*, patriotism, the same emotion being excited as in the case of self-love, but excited on behalf of others and not of oneself.<sup>1</sup>

The growth of character consists in the increasing measure in which the emotions and impulses are organized into sentiments. Moreover, every sentiment tends to include in its system all the emotions, thoughts, volitional processes and qualities of character which subserve its ends, and to reject those which do not. Thus there is developed what has been called the Relative Ethics of the Sentiment. Love, for example, tends to acquire its own virtues and vices—long-suffering, gentleness, meekness among virtues, partiality among vices; and because it is never satisfied with the achievement of these virtues it generates ideals to sustain them; while for the pursuit of these ideals it incorporates in its system a series of emotions—aspiration, shame, and the like—and also a series of duties which will enable the mind to say “I must” when the feeling of “I ought” is too weak for its part<sup>2</sup>. Hate, on the other hand, develops no inner system of this kind, but is essentially destructive of all virtues, ideals, and duties that restrain it from its ends.<sup>3</sup> So it is that while love gathers, hate scatters.

Often these two sentiments are strong in the same individual, as when self-love, which makes a man purposive, industrious, and even in a measure public-spirited, goes

<sup>1</sup> Shand, op. cit., pp. 57, 49.

<sup>2</sup> Shand, op. cit., pp. 108-118.

<sup>3</sup> ib., p. 119.

hand in hand with a hatred of all competitors. And in any case every sentiment is in dynamic relation even to those parts of the character not included in its organization, tending more and more to incorporate them in its system, or to counteract and counterbalance them, or simply to let them die, as the case may be. In the last-named case we have a specialized and extreme type of character ; in the second that mediocrity which is perhaps the commonest met with ; in the first that rich moral stature, unsatisfied but undismayed, which is the essence of true nobility of soul.

It is obvious that this psychological theory of character presents many points of contact with the ethic of the New Testament. The dynamic nature of that ethic is the more clearly seen by contrast with the legalistic ethic of Judaism, which it took over and transfigured. The great revolution which Christ effected in ethics was the transfer of the moral life from the sphere of law to that of the sentiments. For the observance of particular injunctions and prohibitions He substituted the governing principle of Love. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind : this is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, namely, this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the Prophets." The root of the moral life lies in Love—that is to say, in a sentiment. And the Sermon on the Mount applies this to particular issues. For "Thou shalt not kill," Jesus substitutes "Thou shalt not be angry"; for "Thou shalt not commit adultery," "Thou shalt not lust"; for equivalence in revenge and the calculated measuring of hate, He enjoins the sentiment of charity to all. It is the sentiment the motive, the "heart" that matters, for good and for ill.

And the object round the idea of which this sentiment is organized belongs to the supernatural order. Sometimes it is "the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"; at another it is "things above," the spiritual contrasted with the visible world; sometimes it is unequivocally Himself. "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall

the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels" (Mark viii. 38). This summation of the Christian moral life in love, and its concentration and dependence upon the Divine character as manifested in the Incarnation of the Son is especially the message of St. John. The Son Himself experiences the Father's love, and communicates this experience to His disciples. "I made known unto them (Jesus says) thy name, and will make it known; that the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them, and I in them" (John xvii. 26). So the love which Christians have for God and for one another is mediated through Jesus. "Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you; abide ye in my love" (John xv. 9). From this sentiment centred in Christ right conduct will inevitably follow: "if ye love me, *ye will keep* my commandments" (xiv. 15). It was not the content of the moral law so much as the motive that was changed. Love to God and love to neighbour were both inculcated in the Mosaic law, and in that sense the Christian "commandment" was "old." Yet it was also new, because its fulfilment sprang from a new source in the heart, namely, the experience of Regeneration by Christ's word. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John xiii. 24). M. Godet has said that while in the earlier chapters of the Fourth Gospel the relation between Jesus and His disciples is expressible in the phrase "I and you," in the later chapters it takes the form rather of "I and Mine." It is significant that the point at which this "new commandment" is given is precisely that at which this change becomes most pronounced in the Gospel record.

Our Lord's discourses in the Fourth Gospel are, no doubt, much coloured by the Evangelist's mature experiences of the Christian life. In him the Christ-sentiment is fully formed, and the stages and methods of its formation are in the main taken for granted; though his careful emphasis upon the promise of the Comforter shows what store he set upon the work of the Holy Spirit in maintaining the

sentiment. For the psychological mechanism—if one may use the phrase—conditioning this Christian character we must turn rather to the earlier writers, especially St. Paul. We have already seen how central the Person of Christ is to his conception of the New Creation. Can we say more precisely, then, wherein this New Creation consists? Surely the answer is that it consists particularly in the formation of a new sentiment in the mind of the believer; in the re-direction of his emotional and volitional life towards a new object, namely, the historic and ascended Christ, and the interaction of His living Personality, transcendent pure and gracious, with the human soul.

Various facts support this interpretation, and fall easily into place under it. There is first the centrality of the Person of Christ in all those passages where the ideas of the New Creation are used, and the explicit connexion of the moral life with Him. When St. Paul says that “if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature” (2 Cor. v. 17), it is to show that selfishness is alien to the Christian profession. When he sums up discipleship to Christ as a putting off of the old man and a putting on of the new, it is the substitution of honesty and truth for self-seeking and deceit that he has in mind (Eph. iv. 20-24). When St. Peter reminds his readers of their Regeneration through God’s living and abiding message of the Cross, it is to provoke them to “unfeigned love of the brethren” (1 Pet. i. 18-25). When St. Paul contrasts the disinterested love of the Son in becoming Incarnate with the proud ambition of Adam, his purpose is to elicit in the Philippian Church a Christlike mind of unity, humility, and mutual service (Phil. ii. 1-6). And just as in St. John the name for this sentiment in its ripened form is Love, so in St. Paul it is especially Faith. Faith begins by “hearing” (Rom. x. 17, Gal. iii. 5)—by the presentation of Christ, that is, to the consciousness; it is developed by “obedience” (2 Cor. x. 5), which is the organization of ever-increasing elements of our mental life into the Christ-sentiment; it is mellowed by trial into “patience” or endurance (Jas. i. 3), when the sentiment has acquired for

its support those habits and duties which belong to it ; and closely knit to this patience, as life's probation shows our insufficiency in duty, follows Hope (Rom. v. 3-5) embodying the ideals of the Christ-sentiment. And Hope " puts not to shame," when the sentiment is so far built up : for the object of the sentiment is none other than Christ Himself, a Person, both God and man, whose love flows back through all the tendencies and impulses of the heart which seeks Him.

Moreover, this relation to Christ shows itself as psychologically a sentiment, not only in its tendency to organize in its system all emotions, impulses, and qualities of character which assist it, but also in its intolerance of those which do not. Broadly, these are subsumed under the category of " sin " ; and so St. John can say that " whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not" (1 John iii. 6). For sin is unbelief. More particularly, it is the pursuit of the ends of the self without regard to those ends which the self itself is intended to serve. It is significant how the qualities which St. Paul reprobates are precisely those which belong especially to the self-regarding sentiment, and to the instincts of self-assertion or " positive self-feeling " and of pugnacity, which are predominant in it. Eliminate strife and vain-glory from St. Paul's delineation of the ethics of the natural man, now renounced by Christians, and the whole point of his moral teaching is blunted. Vain-glory is the characteristic of the unregenerate man in his relation to God, strife in his relation to his fellow-men. Both alike belong to characters in which the self is the ultimate object around the idea of which the main system of emotional tendencies is grouped. Both alike, therefore, are inconsistent with a moral life which has Christ as the centre of its dominating sentiment.

But why does the formation of this sentiment give rise to such a conception of the New Creation ? And how indeed does it come to be found ? The answer to this question, be it said at once, lies outside psychology. But the New Testament does not hesitate as to what the true answer is. The presentation of Christ to the consciousness is mediated through human lips and ears ; but it is made

effective and brought home by the Holy Spirit. He is the Spirit of that same God who raised Jesus from the dead (Rom. viii. 11). He is likewise the Spirit of Christ (Rom. viii. 9); indeed He is, under one aspect—the dynamic aspect—Christ Himself (2 Cor. iii. 17, 18). And it is because God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts that we can approach Him with the Son's utterance, "Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6). His essential task is to present Christ to our consciousness—to bring to remembrance all that He said (John xiv. 26), to bear witness of Him (John xv. 26), to impress His sovereign authority upon us (1 Cor. xii. 3), to glorify and to reveal Him to us (John xvi. 13). And as He first presents the living Christ to the soul, so too He renews our vision of Him. This is that work of sanctification by the Spirit which follows upon justification and belongs to faith in the truth (1 Cor. vi. 11, 2 Thess. ii. 13). And it is through His instrumentality that "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts" (Rom. v. 5). The relation, that is to say, which the Spirit mediates and creates, is a reflex one. Herein, indeed, lies the whole meaning and potentiality of grace. Grace is that reflex action and influence of Christ upon the believer which the Spirit makes possible. For He brings us by faith into contact, not with a dead Christ, a Christ of long ago, but with the risen and ascended Christ who still and to all eternity lives and works, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." To be in contact with Him is to be living in grace.

And because the Holy Spirit does this, the Christian moral life can be truly spoken of as due to His creation. Christians "walk by the Spirit"; the qualities of the Christian character are "the fruit of the Spirit." In the sentiment so formed pride and envy will have no place, for they belong to the flesh—to the natural man who has followed his natural inclinations (Gal. v. 16-26). But now a new man has been created through the creation of a new Christ-Sentiment in the heart; and this is no work of man, but of God—of God in action in the Holy Ghost.

There is more than metaphor, then, in the New Testament idea of the New Creation; for there is more than the

mere re-direction of the emotional life of believers. In the first place, Christ Himself, the centre of Christian Sentiment and the object of Faith, is a second Adam, the man from Heaven—supernatural, that is to say, in a sense not true of other men. And in the second place, because He is a living and loving Person, He transfigures and exalts the very love which He evokes. The sentiment organized in Him is a channel of grace from Him to us as well as—indeed immeasurably more than—a channel of faith from us to Him ; a ladder on which the angels of God descend as well as ascend. It is the property of love to impart, not love only, but life and being ; and of Divine love, therefore, to impart Divine life and Divine being. When the Alexandrian Fathers said that “ Christ became man so that men might become divine,” they were expressing the metaphysical potentialities implied in the sentiment of love. The Christian moral life, centred in the supernatural Christ, is the symbol and fruit, as also the condition and proximate cause, of a status of sonship to God involving a new and distinct order and level of reality in relation to the rest of mankind.

We may appeal, then, to the evidence of the moral life of the Church for an answer to the question, “ Does God act ? ” The part of the evidence chosen for our purpose has been the New Testament, for that belongs to the age of freshest experience and most vivid record ; but its testimony could be paralleled abundantly from the Christian literature of all ages. Perhaps its most striking embodiment outside the pages of Scripture is to be found in the 2nd century baptismal hymns, called *The Odes of Solomon*. And this testimony is unanimous that the Christian moral life is dependent both for its inception and for its constant renewal upon the Holy Spirit. Moreover, whatever else theology may teach us of the Holy Spirit, He is always and everywhere *God in action*<sup>1</sup>. It is true that His supernatural activity is often frustrated by stubbornness, obscured by unbelief, repressed by the natural proclivities

<sup>1</sup> cf. E. F. Scott : the Spirit is “ the general term, consecrated by immemorial usage, for Divine action.”

of our hearts. Yet even in the darkest times, and when society seemed to have most forgotten its Christian calling, there have never been wanting those whose nobility of character has made them veritably "the light of the world."

Through such souls alone  
God stooping shows sufficient of His light  
For us in the dark to rise by.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Browning, *The Ring and The Book*.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ANGLICAN THEOLOGY AND ENGLISH RELIGION

WHAT a note of the Church is the mere production of a man like Butler, a pregnant fact to be meditated on ! And how strange it is that, if it be as it seems to be, the real meaning of his work is only just now beginning ! and who can prophesy in what it will end ? Thus our divines grow with centuries, expanding after their death in the minds of their readers into more and more exact Catholicism as years roll on.—NEWMAN.

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Anglo-Catholicism began to assert itself under the Stuarts, but, not content with teaching, found it necessary to try to promote its influence by allying itself with the civil power and an unpopular theory of government. Persecution caused a reaction, and Puritanism had once more an opportunity ; but Puritanism was alien to the English mind, and the final settlement came in the Church restoration, which inherited the traditions of English learning and combined the different elements which had contributed to its growth.—BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER.

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It is a more excellent way that theological speculation should have free play, unhampered by any suspicion of disloyalty, while on the other hand those who have no bent towards such speculation should be content, without sitting in judgment on those who are called to engage in it, to be faithful to their own religious experience, and to use for its expression and as a means towards its further development the guidance of the tradition which embodies the main experience of the community.—C. C. J. WEBB.

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THE principles of every great tradition of scientific thought are to be found in certain points of tension or rigidity which condition the flexibility of its movement. Both elements, the fixed and the flexible, are necessary, if the whole process is to be in touch with life. The flexibility is demanded by the necessity of constantly assimilating new experience and knowledge, and of adjusting the old and the new. Moreover, no branch of science is more sensitive to this demand than theology. The mechanical sciences can assume the Lucretian adage, *eadem sunt omnia semper*, and can reckon that the sequences which they study are invariable provided

that all the factors be taken into account. Even biology, while it rejects mechanism as a sufficient explanation of its *data*, is yet assured that the category of evolution is potentially large enough to cover all the phenomena of physical life. Both alike can rule out for practical purposes the possibility of freedom. But theology, whose concern is with the relations of God and man, is in a different position ; for freedom is an essential postulate of both. It is true that theology includes in its subject-matter large areas of experience where uniformity prevails. Man's behaviour in response to religion and moral *stimuli* is in great measure calculable ; and the science of psychology, which exhibits this and enables us from one point of view to understand it, is therefore germane to the study of religion. On God's side, too, if He be such as Christian thought portrays Him, there is nothing arbitrary or capricious for us to take into our consideration. "Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail," represents a fundamental factor in Christian belief about Him. He governs the world by the intrinsic laws of His Own Being,, and these in some part we know. But, when all this is premised, the fact of freedom both in God and in man renders the task of theology peculiarly complex. His providence and grace reveal themselves with such ever-changing variety and individuality, and man's apprehension of and adjustment to the promptings of Supernature are likewise so varied and conditioned by such a network of circumstances and motives, that this part of theology's subject-matter seems almost to baffle the understanding. The result is to exact of it a flexibility unique among the sciences and to reduce proportionately the measure of certain knowledge in its conclusions. We see through a glass darkly : we know only in part.

Yet, if we do see and know, even though only in part, it is because there are in this flexible process of thought certain points of special tension. Were it otherwise, Christian theology as a system of knowledge about God and man would inevitably lose its identity, dissolving on one side into superstition, and on the other side into scepticism. Every science has principles of this kind on

which it insists with rigidity; and in theology, where flexibility is so essential, the need of such principles is the more imperative. It is they which constitute on its intellectual side what Newman called the *idea* of Christianity—that in it, namely, which through many forms of expression and development remains essentially the same. I say, “on its intellectual side,” because the idea itself is not solely intellectual; it expresses itself also and equally in feeling, in motive and conduct, in the total reaction of the Christian society to life. Christian art, architecture, and literature, Christian institutions, Christian forms of worship are therefore all embodiments of the idea, and all give meaning to the saying that *pectus facit theologum*. But the intellectual presentation of the idea and of its relation to the rest of human knowledge is a task that belongs to theology. And what we want to know in regard to any tradition that claims to represent Christianity is what its vital principles are. What are those points on which it leans its whole weight when it reaches out to new ventures of faith and knowledge? On what is it prepared to stake its existence? What does it claim to be of the *esse* of Christian belief?

One of the commonest answers to this question comes from those who claim that the points of tension in Christian theology consist in certain *formulae*. Sometimes it is the Creeds, at others the conciliar definitions of the first four, or of the first six, centuries of Christendom. The most consistent exposition of this view, however, is to be found in the Orthodox Churches of the East, which regard the decrees of the Seven Ecumenical Councils as enshrining the fixed principles of the Faith. Within their limits there is room for considerable latitude in the interpretation of Scripture and in the development of Tradition; but the *formulae* themselves are unchangeable, whether by addition, modification, or subtraction. This view has an obvious simplicity and appeals on that ground; but where advanced as a sufficient account of the matter, it is open to very serious objection. For *formulae* are not, in fact, the simple tokens they appear. Not only do they constantly change their meaning as the terms in which they are couched change

theirs in common parlance, so that words like Person, Substance, Satisfaction, Justification, Works—to name only a few of the more famous *theologumena* of Christendom—mean one thing in one century and something different in another; but a disproportionate emphasis on them at the expense of other factors in the religious process may easily produce a condition of intellectual stagnation from which escape is difficult. All *formulæ* are in the nature of crystallizations of thought in the language current when they are fixed. So regarded they may well have a permanent value for Christian theology. But it cannot be the value of completeness. For the spiritual life of the Church to which they were related did not cease to develop when these crystallizations took place. On the contrary, the vast expansion of Christian experience and thought since the Great Schism represents an element of positive addition to our knowledge of God. His Spirit has led man, as Christ promised, to fresh apprehensions of His revelation of Himself. New problems have arisen with which the old *formulæ* did not deal; and the attempt to formulate the solutions of these reacts in turn upon those solutions already accepted. The Eastern Church presents, generally speaking, precisely that appearance of arrested development which we should expect in a Church where *formulæ* had come to dominate theology unduly.

It has been the wisdom of Rome to avoid this pitfall, and to realize that *formulæ* by themselves would not suffice as the groundwork of Christian theology. It is probably true that Rome has been, and is, not less jealous than the East of the OEcumenical formulations of the Faith. But Rome has insisted that Christian assent should be not to *formulæ* only, but to the particular body also which affirms and holds them. It is necessary for the believer to be in communion with the Holy See; and the living Church, so conceived, has authority to propound definitions of faith which, in theory at least, are not less binding than those of the great Councils. Moreover, this adhesion itself has received dogmatic expression in the decree of Papal Infallibility. Yet it may be questioned whether the

"notional" element in this decree has not been over-estimated. Roman Catholic theologians, who should know their own business best, have frequently confessed to the difficulty of saying exactly what it means, if regarded as an intellectual proposition. On the other hand its practical significance is plain. It sums up in clear-cut form that process of centralization which took its rise from the Council of Trent, and presents the obligation of fellowship in the One Body of Christ in a signally impressive form by translating it into the language of an article of faith. Its real importance—so, at least, it might be urged—in the whole context of Christian theology is that it includes submission to a particular ecclesiastical jurisdiction among the fundamental principles governing Christian thought.

The Roman view of the rigid points in the Christian system has the merit of avoiding the danger of arrested development which besets an excessive reliance on *formulæ*; but it encounters difficulties of its own not less formidable. We may define them by saying that this view involves at bottom an *absoluteness* in regard both to truth and to right which is inconsistent with the nature of God as the New Testament reveals Him, and of His relation to man. The absoluteness in regard to truth is expressed in the claim to Infallibility—a claim which, however hedged about with reservations,<sup>1</sup> makes no allowance for the permanent and apparently ineradicable defects and limitations of the human mind in its endeavours to know or to voice the truth. It imports into our conception of the Church precisely that error which we have discarded in our conception of the Bible—the notion, namely, that the infallibility of the Spirit who inspires both Scripture and Church is reproduced without refraction by the human *media* in the fruits of His Inspiration. But that is contrary to the whole testimony of those whose experience of God has been most vivid; their certainty that their Divine illumination is real is always balanced by a keen consciousness of their own imperfections.

<sup>1</sup>For an interesting discussion of Papal Infallibility reference may be made to W. L. Knox, *The Catholic Movement in the Church of England* pp. 134 ff.

And equally solid are the objections, if the Roman claim be advanced in regard to jurisdiction rather than to truth. It might be conceded, for instance, that Infallibility was not an ideal term to apply to the doctrinal authority of the Papacy ; and yet claimed that in any case Catholic truth can only be found in the Roman Communion. What this means, however, is that on every occasion where schism has occurred between the Roman Church and others, Rome has been right, and they wrong. It is a claim to an exclusive prerogative which was unknown to the Church of the New Testament and the earliest Christian generations, and involves a reading of history which at several critical junctures means subordinating the moral judgment to the exigencies of a theory.

Both East and West, however, bear witness to principles of permanent value in Christian life and thought ; and if Anglican theology claims to represent more truly than either the "idea" of Christianity, it is not because it rejects the other two *in toto* but because it holds the factors which they emphasize in a juster proportion and in combination with other factors of equal moment. It is often said that Anglicanism is difficult to define ; and this is true. But simplicity of definition is not necessarily an advantage, except for the more superficial kinds of appeal. This is markedly so with the deeper things of the spirit. And the essence of the Anglican claim is that the true points of tension in Christian thought are in that category. Reliance upon the Spirit of God as the ultimate ground of the identity which persists through all the developments of theology carries with it consequences not only for the content, but also for the spirit of belief ; so that what is at stake is not only what we believe and know, but equally the manner of our believing and knowing.

Perhaps this principle is best expressed by saying that Anglicanism rests on, and works from, a certain *inward proportion of faith*, in which the three elements of tradition, reason, and experience are combined. It is important to insist that this proportion is inward and intrinsic, and not adventitious. Criticism, friendly or controversial, has some-

times failed to make the distinction, and has assumed that Anglicanism was essentially an artificial holding-together of independent and heterogeneous elements—of Catholicism and Protestantism, for instance, or Catholicism and Modernism. Were that the case, it need hardly be said that its claim to permanence as an intellectual construction of Christianity would not be worth discussion. But in fact the criticism itself will not survive examination. Appeal could be made to history, and the evidences of interior unity would be hard to gainsay or belittle. But perhaps a subtler test is to be found in the writings of the great English divines. None can read Donne or Jeremy Taylor or Butler or Maurice without realizing that he encounters in them an intellectual position which at any rate rings true to itself. It is markedly free from those subterfuges, compromises, and resources which would be inevitable if the criticism we are considering were true. The comprehensiveness which it voices is not that of an empire which superimposes peace upon warring tribes or social groups naturally independent, but that of a race which maintains its unity through great diversity of development. What the theory before us would require is that expediency, and not truth, should be the governing interest of Anglican divinity. That is an interpretation of it which needs to be not only made, but substantiated ; and, if true, it should be capable of ready proof. For the policy which it presupposes is at its best familiar to us as that of Gamaliel ; at its worst it is that of Gallio.

We have spoken of Anglicanism as characterized by a certain inward proportion of faith, comprising tradition, experience, and reason. The claim made is not an exclusive one, and does not imply that any of these elements is to be found in complete isolation from the rest in any of the great divisions of Christendom. Nevertheless, differences of emphasis afford instructive comparisons. Adhesion to tradition, for example, is clearly the distinguishing mark of Eastern Orthodoxy.<sup>1</sup> Rome combines

<sup>1</sup>If the description of the Abyssinian Church given in Stanley's *History of the Eastern Church* is true, it might be said that traditionalism is there found in its unmixed form.

with tradition a far larger regard both for experience and reason ; but it is the constructive, not the critical, reason which she welcomes, while her attitude to experience is narrowed by an over-jealous insistence on the prerogative of authority. Protestantism, especially in its English and Puritan form, has made much of experience, but it has largely missed the synthetic and co-operative position of reason in theology ; while in its treatment of tradition it has staked all upon the letter of Scripture, and often ignored the testimony of the saints and doctors of the Church as to its interpretation. No doubt, defects of proportion analogous to these are to be found in various phases of Anglicanism ; but if history in its broad sweep be a mirror of the principles underlying great institutions, they are not distinctive of it as a whole. Over and over again the essential spirit of the system has reasserted itself, like a ship righting itself in a storm ; and we are able to see again the well-balanced proportions to which it is built.

### (I) TRADITION

By tradition I mean all that is involved in the appeal to Scripture and to antiquity. Some account of this appeal has already been given, and some justification of it attempted, in the second chapter of this volume ; and that will suffice, I hope, to dispose of the notion that contempt for tradition is a mark of superior intelligence. The truth is that there is no human activity—whether it be the pursuit of science or of a trade or of a sport or pastime—where excellence can be attained without the fullest lessons being drawn from the traditions proper to it ; and there is no reason to regard religion as an exception to the rule. There are, however, certain aspects of the Anglican appeal to tradition which call for further treatment here. This appeal is represented in its continuous and duly accredited Ministry, its liturgical rites, and the place assigned to the Creeds and similar dogmatic formulations in its system. It is this last that I propose to consider now.

The challenge to the Creeds comes from Modernism ;

and it sometimes takes the form of a desire to revise those we have, or to substitute others which will be reckoned more in tune with modern knowledge. Experiments which have recently been made in this direction do not seem to have been very happy ; and it will be time to speak of superseding the older formularies when the suggested substitutes have shown more signs of being able to rally faith. The notion of revision is perhaps more important, because it can at least be urged that our existing Creeds are in fact the product of a process of revision, and that what has been done once may safely be done again. The idea, however, harbours a double fallacy. In the first place, it ignores the fact that the revision of credal forms in antiquity was in the nature of spontaneous, and at first, local developments and additions to meet concrete issues then critical in the Church. Analogous revision to-day would not, therefore, take the form of omitting particular clauses which cause Modernists difficulty, but of incorporating fresh statements in explication of the Church's mind on (let us say) the Eucharistic Sacrifice or the real meaning of the Kingdom of Heaven. And secondly, the claim to revise the Creeds implies a completeness and certitude in modern knowledge which are surely not self-evident. Even in the last generation men's outlook both on the physical universe and upon spiritual things has undergone changes of the most drastic kind which suggest anything but certitude ; and we have no ground for believing that it would be reliable either in what it rejected or indeed in what it chose to endorse. There is a provincialism of time as well as of place ; and it is the part of wisdom to reject them both.

The Modernist challenge has, however, inevitable reactions upon the defence of the Creeds. Broadly speaking, Catholic vindication of the Creeds takes two directions, corresponding to the two kinds of proposition which they contain. These two schools may be distinguished for convenience as the historical and the analytical. The historical school, of which Dr. Gore is the foremost living exponent, takes its stand upon that element of simple

testimony which is the original nucleus of the Gospel and which consists for the most part of historical propositions ; and it proceeds both to verify these facts by the recognized methods of historical enquiry and to draw out their doctrinal significance. The analytical school,<sup>1</sup> on the other hand, works in to history rather than out from it. It regards the credal statements as in the first instance symbols of spiritual experience ; and its first concern is with those *credenda* which lie closest to this experience, irrespective of whether they contain a historical element or not. Furthermore, it insists very strongly that the Creeds should not be isolated from the rest of the thought-process of which they form part, as though they were *sui generis*. Symbols of equal significance and truth may be found in liturgical forms, for instance, or in beliefs which have never received formal definition. On this view, doctrines like those of Grace or of the Real Presence rank *pari passu* with those of the Virgin Birth or the Resurrection of the Body.

The time has not yet come for a synthesis of these two schools of thought ; but one or two points of convergence may be noted. Both alike accept the position that the historical statements in the Christian Faith must be vindicated by the methods of historical science. Both alike, moreover, would insist that when a historical fact is in the court of reason, documentary evidence is not the only evidence admissible : considerations of "congruity"—to use a phrase of Canon Quick's—are also relevant ; so that, if an alleged fact is congruous with other known facts, that congruity must be thrown into the scale beside the direct evidence of documents. At this point, indeed, the contribution of the analytical school becomes of great importance, and of all the greater importance the further the historical problems as such are removed from the centre of its interest. For this school maintains that its main interest is in the faith-value and not in the fact-value of historical statements in the Creed. The irreducible element in the dogma of the Virgin Birth, for instance, is the belief that the kind of

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Will Spens's *Belief and Practice* and Mr. A. E. J. Rawlinson's *Dogma, Fact, and Experience* are the best examples of this school.

uniqueness which is thus ascribed to Jesus Christ is truly predicated of Him : the question whether the dogma is true in historical detail must be left to historians. But this very suspension of judgment as to historical detail lends all the greater weight to such arguments as may be drawn from the congruity of the alleged historical fact with other facts. These other facts are precisely of that order with which the analytical school is at home, and on which it insists—facts, for example, of the character of God, or of the uniqueness of Christ, or of the super-normal element in the operations of Divine providence or grace. These are facts which the analytical school is well qualified by its methods to establish and to interpret, and to establish without suspicion of historical *parti pris* ; and the weight of any demonstration that a particular historical fact is congruous with them is thereby increased, when the total evidence for the fact in question is considered.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, such a view carries with it a consequence of great moment, and one that is in fact in full harmony with Anglican standards. The measure in which the analytical method contributes to the support of the historical school is also the measure in which the right to complete liberty of historical enquiry must be conceded to scholars. This does not mean that facile or contumacious denial of parts of the Creed should be permitted to pass uncensured ; but it does mean that theology shall be allowed a very large freedom of critical and constructive hypothesis. This freedom may perhaps involve risks to the faith of individuals, but they are infinitely less than the risks to which the Church as a whole is exposed, if or when this liberty is withheld. For it is a breath that blows away the dust which only too easily settles down upon tradition ; and the temper with

<sup>1</sup>It may of course, be urged that the "congruity" is precisely what has produced the evidence for the "fact." But that is to give the element of "congruity" a more preponderant rôle than can, in reason, be claimed for it. It is one thing, for instance, to say of a person of whom something is recorded, "I can well believe it: it is wholly in keeping with all else that I know of him"; but quite another to say, without evidence, "It is quite in keeping with his character that he should have done this or that; we will, therefore, say that he did." This last is what Dr. E. A. Abbott calls the fallacy of the Fitness of Things. cf. his *St. Thomas of Canterbury*, Vol. I. §§ 375, 388.

which tradition accepts it is the index, not of its weakness, but of its strength.<sup>1</sup>

### (2) EXPERIENCE

Religious experience is that element in the Church's system which is the touch-stone of tradition and the life of reason. It is the touch-stone of tradition, because, unless tradition brings men into contact with the living God, it is but dry bones and useless lumber ; except in so far as Catholic theology, more careful of the past than Protestantism, remembers that even fossils tell a tale. And it is the life of reason, because it provides reason with ever fresh material for its activity, making it constructive as well as critical. Experience, of course, must be interpreted in its large sense, not as consisting in particular states of religious feeling, but as the total experience which the religious man has of life. Canon Quick has pointed out the curious paradox that "the characteristic genius of Catholicism is liberal, that of Protestantism conservative."<sup>2</sup> The reason for this is that the element of experience, which provides the driving-force of development, is so much ampler and more massive in Catholicism. For there it is social as well as individual ; moving slowly and silently like leaven ; distrustful of momentary sensations, but setting great store by every link that binds it to the normal experience of believers and affects the Church's reaction on the world.

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps I may be allowed to draw attention to what seems to me an admirable example of the right exercise of the liberty of scholarship in Canon Streeter's recent book, *The Four Gospels*. He concludes his discussion of the Infancy Narratives (pp. 266-268) with the following sentences : " But the question whether the reading of *b* should be regarded as original is not one which anyone is likely to decide purely on grounds of textual criticism. Those who believe that Christ was born of a Virgin will think it improbable that Luke should have neglected to make this clear, and will scoff at the idea of rejecting the evidence of all the Greek MSS. and all the versions in favour of that of a single Latin MS. of the fifth century. On the other hand, those who regard the Virgin birth as improbable, but are aware of the immense importance attached to the belief by the Fathers at least as early as Ignatius of Antioch, A.D. 115, will think it remarkable that a reading which ignores it should have survived till so late a date even in a single MS."

<sup>2</sup> *Catholic and Protestant Elements in Christianity*, p. 21.

Anglicanism has a peculiar relation to the element of experience in religion; for the Church of England is not only a Church, but a culture. As Troeltsch pointed out, it is a Church's capacity for that dual rôle which constitutes it a Church and not a sect. The capacity was found in full measure in the Church of the Middle Ages; but the English Church realized, as the Church on the Continent did not, that the cultural element in the whole complex has its own necessities of development which religion must recognize. The 16th century witnessed the effervescence of new forces of the spirit—intellectual, political, moral—which had long been germinating in the soil of Christendom; and it was characteristic of the English Church that it assimilated the new experience in time. There was inevitably some loss. The assimilation was neither quite complete enough nor quite rapid enough to overtake the advance-guard of the new order and so prevent an excessive individualism from striking a firm root in English Christianity. But at least Anglicanism continued as a culture—that is to say, as a Church.<sup>1</sup> It is significant that the characteristic products of Anglicanism in this period were the English Bible and the Prayer Book, while those of Rome were the decrees of the Council of Trent and the Ignatian rule, and those of Protestantism the series of Confessions extending from Augsburg to Westminster. In that fact lies the clue to the proportion in which Anglican theology sets the element of religious experience.

At the same time it is in the life of worship and prayer that this experience is focused and most clearly expressed; and we may therefore expect to find a clue to many of the riddles of English Christianity in the study of the relation of theology to that life. The claim here made for Anglicanism is that it carried with it through the vortex of the Reformation with most success the proportion of tradition, reason and experience which is fundamental to a true presentation of Christianity. It is not claimed that it was always consistent in maintaining it. It is dangerous to

<sup>1</sup>One of the most valuable features of Dr. Headlam's book, *The Church of England*, is the way in which this aspect of Anglicanism is brought out.

generalize ; but there are, I think, certain lessons to be drawn from the contrast between Anglican theology in the 17th and in the 18th centuries respectively which are instructive. Broadly speaking, one may say that the theology of the earlier period is marked by a close contact with the devotional life which is not found in the later. Its chief representatives—Andrewes, Jeremy Taylor, Cosin, Ken, Bishop Wilson—have all left an abiding mark upon English devotion. Compared with this, the theology of the 18th century, even when it reaches its climax in the grandeur of Bishop Butler, is defective. With the exception of one great master of the hidden life—William Law—theology has lost contact with the vital Christian experience. And this contrast reveals itself in a striking difference in the attitude of Anglican theology in these two periods towards Puritanism. In both, the attitude is critical ; but whereas in the 17th century the *gravamen* lies against the narrowness of Puritanism, in the 18th it lies rather against its “enthusiasm.” The first charge, moreover, was just and necessary ; the second was a disaster. And it arose from a disastrous condition—from the condition of divorce between theology and experience which followed the expulsion of the Non-Jurors. It may seem a paradox to say that, had the Anglo-Catholic element in the Church of England represented by the Non-Jurors not been expelled, the secession of the Methodists would never have taken place. Such a statement, at any rate, entails a large measure of conjecture. What we can say is that the Non-Juring element in the Church represented a connexion of theology with experience which had close affinities with the position of Wesley ; and that the lack of sympathy with the autonomy of the Spirit, which reached its zenith in the Hanoverian age, was a primary cause (though the agents were different in the two cases) responsible for the loss of both.

Such was the *damnosa hereditas* of schism which the greatest age of the English Church and people—the Victorian age—found to hand, when the recovery from the Napoleonic Wars gave occasion for reconstruction. The essential

feature of that reconstruction was the return of religious experience to its true place in Anglican theology and practice. Of the three forces which contributed to this process, the Oxford Movement was from this point of view the most significant. The Evangelical revival, which preceded it by a generation, came as the bubbling-up within the borders of the English Church of a stream which ran with equal and perhaps greater strength outside it. Anglicanism canalized it, and enabled it to do splendid service in the promotion of schools and Sunday schools, in missionary expansion, and in moulding public opinion with regard to the lot of prisoners and slaves. But this canalization was institutional, not theological; and it was as much the political as the religious side of Anglican institutions which determined the course which Evangelicalism took. Its narrow and one-sided theology, while it was often an inspiration to individuals, rarely provided any serious contribution to thought. The Christian Socialist movement, on the other hand, was typically Anglican, in that it assumed in the Church regarded as a national institution a peculiar responsibility for the social improvement of the people; it echoed Cobbett's saying that an English Churchman might well combine his religion and his politics, seeing that the Creed which he confessed was included in an Act of Parliament. But the experience which this movement brought into the life of the Church was too fragmentary, and too close to the margin of the religious and the secular, to affect more than a section of English religion; and it was left for later generations to realize that in Frederick Denison Maurice English theology had possessed—and had misunderstood—one of the few seminal minds of the century.

The Oxford revival, on the other hand, was essentially the re-emergence in the Church of England of its own characteristic piety, as the 17th century had known it. Like the discovery of "the book of the law in the house of the Lord," by Hilkiah the priest and Shaphan the scribe, the Tractarian interpretation of Anglicanism was at the

outset the work of clergy and scholars ; but, no less than the book of Deuteronomy in Judah, it made its way through every department of the Church's activity, and was hailed as men only hail something that they have "loved long since and lost awhile." It is, no doubt, easy to attribute to this single cause results to which other and quite distinct causes contributed ; but I do not think we can account for the fact that the ends for which the Oxford Movement contended have so largely prevailed, except on the view that what it was seeking to restore to the Church of England was an essential part of its own soul. The use of the Anglo-Catholic name is of infinitely less importance than the fact it portended, namely, the restoration of that proportion of tradition, experience, and reason—the "threefold cord not quickly broken"—which is distinctively Anglican. The life of worship and prayer, as that had manifested itself down the ages, was brought back to the central hearth of English religion ; it was shown to be the essential meaning of the Book of Common Prayer, the highest end of pastoral work as that was represented in the Ordinal or the parochial system, and the inspiring motive of English theology.

But we may go further. If it be true that the expulsion of this element from the Church of England in the 18th century was closely connected with the loss of those other streams of religious experience which crystallized into the Wesleyan and other Nonconformist bodies, then we must expect that its re-integration with Anglicanism will have reactions of no less consequence upon the problem of religious reconciliation in England. I use the word reconciliation rather than re-union, because I am here dealing, not with denominational divisions as such, but with the *disjuncta membra* of a religious life which was once one. And the point I wish to urge is that the re-birth of this element in Anglicanism opens a door of sympathy between the Church of England and the Evangelical communions which should never have been closed. Like speaks to like across the walls that divide us ; we recognize the fellowship that binds Bunyan with Newman, Simeon with Liddon,

John Wesley with Arthur Stanton ; and we claim our own part with all.

Yet the hope which a sane and balanced Anglo-Catholicism affords of a real reconciliation would be slender if it rested only on the discovery of affinities between individuals in various traditions. If that hope is well-founded, it must be because the rejuvenated English Church contains within its expression of Christian experience factors which are essential in the Nonconformist witness. If I mention three such, it is not in the belief that they are exhaustive ; but rather because, when viewed in this context, they will appear in a different—and I will venture to say, a truer—guise than they are sometimes made to wear, and one which is characteristic of Anglicanism.

(a) It might seem paradoxical to adduce the Sacrament of Penance—to give it its least attractive name—as a factor in the Anglican presentation of Christianity which may claim to awaken echoes in Evangelicalism. In the systematized form in which the Sacrament meets us in the Roman Church, redolent as it is of certain notorious abuses, it may well appear as a bone of controversy rather than a message of peace. But—let us say at once—that is not the way in which the English Church commends Confession and Absolution to the conscience ; and to do so is to mistake its mind. The English Church commends Confession to believers as a free and spontaneous act of the soul seeking to be cleansed, and Absolution as what St. Paul called by the title of the Ministry of Reconciliation. And what makes it an essentially Evangelical sacrament is this : it is fundamentally an individual's privilege. One of the classical grounds on which Non-conformity has based the necessity of secession from the Church was that the claims of the individual soul were sacrificed to the maintenance of an ecclesiastical system. The parish priest, they said, was a functionary rather than a father and friend to his people ; and he showed little sensibility towards the subtler pains and promptings of the spirit. The result was that the more scrupulous souls

turned elsewhere for help, and found in the Wesleyan class-meeting or the Friends' meeting-house, the opportunities for disburdenment of conscience or for direct treatment of their condition which the Established Church seemed to deny. To-day, in the light of the recovered teaching of the Prayer Book, that objection can no longer be urged. Different temperaments experience the need and the reality of forgiveness in different ways, and the attempt to conform all to one rule—whether it be a rule of Confession for none or of Confession for all—can only miss the many-sided truth of human nature; though it is certainly true that the weight of testimony to the value of Confession as a means of moral education and spiritual development is very impressive. But, at least, none can say that, where this sacrament is offered, the claims of the individual are neglected; and, even if the response be not large, the truth of the Platonic adage—*βίος ἀνεξιταστὸς οὐ βιωτός*—is at least brought home to all.<sup>1</sup>

(b) A further and more impressive indication of the true place of experience in the Anglican proportion of faith is to be found in the restitution of the Eucharist to the centre of the devotional life. It is not a question here of any detail of controversy, such as the hour of service or the manner of celebrating it; but of the plain fact that the Holy Communion has become the source and focus of a warm, reverent, and close-knit social life, as it was in the first ages of Christianity. A century ago and less, Nonconformity could accuse Anglicanism with some justice of formality and stiffness, and Churchmen could do little more than reply that they deemed that preferable to too much sentiment. But the Holy Communion provides the religious life with precisely that element of disciplined sentiment which makes the old dilemma unreal. We have found how every occasion, whether public or private, in the experience of men can be christened and consecrated here; while the fixed rite, with its due, decent and reverent cere-

<sup>1</sup>The early pages of George Fox's *Journal* bear illuminating testimony to the failure of the clergy to speak to his condition. Even where he met with sympathy, he found that his confidences were not kept secret—a curious comment on the value of the secrecy of the confessional.

monial and its assumption of common teaching behind, lays on the heart its firm, yet gentle, restraint.

That, then, is in briefest outline what the recovery of the Holy Communion has meant for English Churchmen : it has been the recovery of a worship which is sufficient for every phase and moment of the spiritual life. There is nothing surprising in this, since it is the worship which Christ Himself appointed for His Church. What is surprising is that there are any to whom a non-communicating Christianity should still seem anything but abnormal.

So far there is a large measure of unanimity in the Anglican witness ; and nothing shows it more clearly to be essentially a Catholic witness. But at the same time it is idle, and in the long run unprofitable, to disguise the serious differences both of belief and practice in regard to the Eucharist which now prevail in the Church of England ; and theology would be abdicating its functions if it did not try to understand and to account for them. For our present purpose we may consider them under two heads—the doctrine of the Real Presence, and the use of the Holy Eucharist in practice.

The doctrine of the Real Presence<sup>1</sup> is an attempt to explain the Master's words of institution in the light of the Church's experience of the service then ordained. It asserts that, when the Church by the prayer of consecration does what Christ did, the elements of bread and wine are changed, not outwardly or bodily, but in respect of their essential significance, so that a new value or meaning is added to that which they had before. This value or meaning, moreover, is of a kind to supersede the ordinary value or meaning, just as—*maiora minoribus aequo*—the value of a piece of paper as paper is superseded when it becomes a Bank of England note. Furthermore, this new and supernatural value is metaphysically as ultimate and as universal as the natural value of the elements, for it rests equally upon the will of Christ who is God.

<sup>1</sup>For a fuller discussion of the doctrine I may refer to my edition of *The First Book of the Irenicum of John Forbes of Corse*, Appendix II (Cambridge University Press, 1923).

The consecrated elements are thus really and properly what He appointed—His Body and Blood. They make Jesus, that is to say, accessible to us, and appropriate by us, in His sacrificed and glorified Manhood, and that in a measure even more real than was possible to the disciples before His Ascension.

Bishop Temple has coined the term “Convaluation” as convenient for the expression of this belief; and I do not think we could improve upon it. Apart from the insuperable philosophical difficulties of “Transubstantiation,” that term is to-day liable to fatal misunderstanding; for science has accustomed us to understand “substance” as meaning something material, and its use in a completely contrary sense involves something of a mental gymnastic. The use of the category of value in the Platonic sense in which Dr. Temple employs it avoids this difficulty.

The choice of a term, however, except in so far as the need of drawing out the philosophical implications of the Real Presence makes it convenient, is not of primary importance. What is important is that the belief behind the term—the belief in the Real Presence—represents a fact of Christian experience which is attested with singular unanimity from the beginning. And the Church of England carried this belief with it right through the Reformation crisis. The 17th century divines, at a time when controversy with Rome was sharp, insisted that this was not in itself one of the points at issue. “The disagreement,” wrote Bishop Mountagu, “is only in de modo præsentia, the thing is yielded to on either side, and there is in the Holy Eucharist a Real Presence. ‘God forbid,’ saith Bishop Bilson, ‘we should deny that the Flesh and Blood of Christ are truly present and truly received of the faithful at the Lord’s table. It is the doctrine that we teach others, and comfort ourselves withal.’” So, too, Andrewes:<sup>1</sup> “As to the

<sup>1</sup>I quote this passage from a paper by the present Dean of Winchester, entitled, “Some Points in the Teaching of the XVII Century Divines as to the Holy Eucharist.” The paper contains a most useful catena of passages from the writings of Bilson, Andrewes, Overall, Laud, William Forbes, Bramhall, Cosin, Thorndike, Ken, and others, all of them to the same effect. See also the uncompromising testimony of Donne quoted in *Theology*, IX. 161 f.

Real Presence we are agreed ; our controversy is as to the mode of it. The Presence we believe to be real, as you do. As to the mode we define nothing rashly nor anxiously investigate." This was the doctrine that accompanied the resuscitation of Eucharistic worship in the Church of England which was the great work of the Oxford Movement ; and it has been proved both to nourish and to explain a great volume of spiritual experience.

It will be observed that this doctrine is quite definitely a doctrine about the elements, and not about Christ's Presence in general or even about sacraments as a whole. All Christians alike are agreed as to the experience of Christ's Presence wherever two or three are gathered together; but the Eucharistic experience is something distinct from that, and it is but darkening counsel to try and explain one experience in terms of the other. For in the Eucharist there is a symbolism of objects as well as of action and of words, and it is effectual as well as didactic ; so that the Holy Communion is not merely an acted parable of grace, but itself a means of grace. Not that the symbolism of objects is independent of that of action ; there is no such thing as a Eucharist without a communion as well as a consecration—the elements become what they become only as part of the whole ordinance which Christ appointed. Belief in the Real Presence is wholly compatible with the view that the elements provide a psychological focus for devotion ; but they do so precisely because they are in fact that Reality in which alone the soul can be satisfied—the Bread of Life and the Wine of Salvation.

I pass to the second point of contemporary controversy—the use of the Eucharist in the life of the Church, and particularly in relation to Sunday. From what has been said above it will be clear that this question is in itself of far less importance than the fact that the central and Catholic experience of the Holy Communion has been recovered throughout the English Church. The problem indeed is a by-product of that fact. To remember that is to

provide the true atmosphere for a solution ; for it recalls us to that common redemption in which all alike partake. And the problem has arisen simply because those who have been most full of the Eucharistic experience have desired that the worship in which it centres should be the dominating fact of Sunday observance.

Broadly speaking, the lines along which the Anglo-Catholic movement has sought a solution has been by the substitution of the Eucharist for Mattins at 11. The objection sometimes urged against this, that it involves the introduction of the Mass, implies a strange perversion of the historical meaning of words ; for Mass is the word used from quite early times, as it is in the Roman Church to-day, for any and every celebration of the Holy Communion, whatever be its hour, or number of communicants, or amount of ceremony. The use of the term is emphatically one of those issues which must be governed by St. Paul's advice about giving and taking offence. Nor are the doctrinal objections of more substance. It cannot too often be asserted that there is no such thing as a non-communicating celebration of the Eucharist. The celebrant at least partakes ; and if the congregation does not, it is because they do not find it convenient at that time. The priest acts representatively on their behalf, and there are many aspects of the service in which they can take part without individually communicating with him. This use of the Holy Communion seems to have been something of an innovation in the days of St. Chrysostom, who regarded it (as most innovations in the Church are regarded) with alarm ; but since then it has become so widely established that the capacity for understanding it might well be regarded as part of a liberal education ; and it is impossible to believe that the Church of England could ever fail to find a place for it.

At the same time, I do not believe that the mere substitution of the Eucharist for Mattins will ever prove a general solution of the right mode of Sunday worship in this country. The real difficulty is not in cities, where the individual has a variety of churches to choose from, but in villages and

country towns, where the parish church has to make a home for wide diversities of temperament. And here I believe that we have often been on wrong lines in trying to substitute a Eucharist without lay communicants for Mattins. One plea for this course is that any other "divides the congregation"; but in fact the congregation is already divided into those who come to church in the morning and those who come in the evening; and the policy we are considering still leaves the latter as much strangers to the Eucharist as before. Further, English Church-people as a whole are individualistic; they do not take easily to the representative idea in worship, and they would reckon themselves as represented more genuinely by members of the congregation than by the priest, when it comes to communicating. I believe, therefore, that our true aim, if we are to make progress towards a solution, should be a real, but not a general, Communion. Every aspect of the Eucharist is then exhibited completely and in its proper proportion. The fact that members of the congregation communicate makes it clear that it is a real Communion, and all the moral lessons of this fact can be brought home in teaching. The fact that many members of the congregation are present without receiving makes it equally clear that the receiving of grace is not the only function of Eucharistic worship in which the individual can join, and that the Lord's Table should only be approached after deliberate preparation. And finally the concentration into one service of every phase of Eucharistic experience gives it an appeal which draws worshippers from Evensong as well as from Mattins.

If such be the type of service we should aim at, what should be its time? The maintenance of a uniform time for Sunday morning worship in all parishes of a diocese or district seems now to be quite impossible, owing to the wide varieties of occupation in which the inhabitants of different places are engaged: nor is there any special reason to regret its disappearance. On the other hand the maintenance of a uniform time on every Sunday in each individual parish does seem an interest of great practical importance. Such

a course does not exclude further provision for those to whom such time is inconvenient ; but most regular worshippers wish to arrange their Sundays on a fixed plan without having to reckon which Sunday of the month it is. It is the decision of what that time shall be when the bulk of worshippers may be expected to gather to the Lord's service which is the difficult problem before us.

The main source of the difficulty comes from the ancient and Catholic obligation of fasting Communion ; and I am bound to say that I do not think that we can hope to meet it, until the nature and limits of that obligation have been honestly faced by the Church of England as a whole. The present situation is as ambiguous and unsatisfactory as it well can be. The most divergent teaching as to the existence of the obligation is given in different sections of the Church ; many of those who habitually communicate early do not in fact come fasting, and some could not without great hardship ; while many clergy who have to celebrate at noon after a number of other services and duties find the rule almost impossible to observe. On the other hand it is surely a sound instinct which has prompted the Catholic custom of receiving the Holy Communion, so far as possible, at an hour when the mind has not been preoccupied with the social duties of the day ; and the observance of the discipline of fasting simply as a discipline has a real value, as enhancing reverence for the Sacrament and emphasizing solidarity with the Church of all the ages.

Anyone who makes a suggestion for dealing with this situation must write tentatively and not in any dogmatic spirit ; and many minds will have to be brought to bear before action can be taken ; and it must be remembered that the issue only arises if, and in so far as, the principle of the Lord's service as the chief congregational act of the Lord's day is accepted. And the first point to be recognized is that the canonical status of the obligation we are considering is apparently not as simple as it is sometimes represented. It is an œcumical obligation, that is to say, as resting on œcumical custom but not on œcumical decree. The formal legislative acts on which it rests are enactments of

local and national Churches, and not of the Church as a whole.<sup>1</sup> It belongs, moreover, to that sphere of ecclesiastical law in which the Church of England has always claimed the right to make its own regulations. It would appear to be, in short, a matter in regard to which Anglican authority could quite properly make a decision and expect it to be observed.

Such a decision would be in the nature both of a recognition of the weight attaching to oecumenical custom and of a dispensation from its more rigorous application. In order to meet the true equities of the case, it would be necessary to assert in the preamble of any such regulation the principle that the Church of England is bound to hold in respect customs of oecumenical authority, and to have regard to the mind of the whole Church which underlies them. And from that principle, it would be possible to proceed to the details of its application. It could be pointed out, for example, that social customs have greatly changed in recent centuries ; that a breakfast early in the day, unknown among our forefathers, has now become for all classes a matter of course ; and that this has already been recognized in seasons of fasting such as Lent, when the rigours of abstention from food until late in the day are no longer expected. The Church, none the less, expects that some self-denial in respect of food will be shown by all its members at those times. It will therefore exercise a similar discretion in regard to the fast before Communion, not requiring in all cases a complete abstention from food but rather some definite act of self-denial ; and this as a token of veneration for the great mystery of the Heavenly Food and of due regard for the mind of the Church Universal.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>I write here under correction ; but I have enquired of more than one canonist on this point, and they cannot refer me to an oecumenical decree. The Canons of the Council of Trullo (692 A.D.) endorsed the strict line about the fast before Communion, and were adopted as part of the English code in 785 A.D. A succession of Archbishops of Canterbury enacted constitutions in a similar sense, the latest apparently being that of Langham in 1367 ; and many of the Reformers were thoroughly strict on this point. St. Thomas Aquinas excepts the case of sickness, where there is danger of the patient dying uncommunicated. The evidence is clearly summarized in *Fasting Reception of the Blessed Sacrament*, by Frederick Hall (1882). For an admirable discussion of the subject by K. E. Kirk, cf. *Theology*, July, 1925.

<sup>2</sup>I must guard myself against the idea that fasting in its rigorous

It would be essential, of course, that any such dispensation should be safeguarded from degenerating into laxity ; and the ingrained love of comfort which is one of the deepest characteristics of our people overflows only too easily into the practice of religion. There are many who can plead neither age nor health nor circumstances as a reason for not observing the old custom in its fulness. For them, the early celebration, with its call to an act of self-discipline,<sup>1</sup> would still be the right time for communicating ; though nothing in the history of the English Church suggests that the habit of communicating every Sunday will be normal for the majority of its members. We need to remember very carefully that weekly Communion, though right for many, would be something of an unreality for many others. What we can and should aim at is rather to ensure that all communicants, however often and at whatever time they receive the Holy Communion, should do so on the basis of simple and definite rules recognized as just and accepted as binding by the whole Church.

Were action of such a kind to be taken formally and deliberately by Anglican authority, I believe that it would do more than anything else to solve the question of Sunday morning worship. The whole Church would have the bracing sense of being under discipline when it drew near to the worship of Almighty God. In some places the plan of conflating Mattins and the Holy Communion at 10.30 or 11 would be adopted ; and it has the merit of liturgical propriety. In others the parish Eucharist would be at an earlier hour—at 9, say, or at 10<sup>2</sup>—and would be followed after an interval by Mattins used as a service of instruction ; for it should be plainly recognized that a Church which includes Mattins as well as the Eucharist in

sense, as a means of subordinating the body to the claims of the spirit, has no longer a place in modern religion. The witness of mystical religion of many different types, confirming as it does the teaching of our Lord, is too strong to allow of such a notion. But I venture to say that the average church-goer would learn to appreciate its place far more readily if he had as a regular part of his own religious life something that belonged to the same category.

<sup>1</sup> cf. the Bishop of Gloucester's opinion, *The Church of England*, p. 101.

<sup>2</sup>This is common to-day in parts of France and Germany, and often follows an earlier sung Eucharist at 7 or 7.30.

its habitual worship is devotionally richer than a Church which is accustomed to the latter only. It might even be hoped that the disastrous<sup>1</sup> hour of noon might be altogether abandoned as suitable for the Holy Communion. But whichever plan were adopted, we should be free from the ceaseless disputes, misunderstandings, and questionings of conscience which attend us at present, and could come to God with the offering of a free heart.

A further question germane to that of the use of the Holy Communion in the Church arises in connexion with Reservation. Two distinct issues are involved here. One concerns the reservation of some part of the elements consecrated at the service in church for the Communion of the sick and others in like case. No doctrinal issue is involved here beyond what is already involved in the service as a whole ; the custom has been common from the earliest ages of the Church ; and little objection is now taken to it in any responsible quarters. It is very doubtful, indeed, whether any explicit rubrical direction for it is really required. The other issue—the devotional use of the Sacrament so reserved—is what causes controversy at the present time ; and it is of this that I propose to say something here.

The problem of what is called “Truth in Worship” is no new one ; and a study of its treatment by a 4th century Father like St. Basil in his treatise *On the Holy Spirit*, might enable us to see it in a juster proportion than it is apt to present through the dust of contemporary controversy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Disastrous because it is a ‘class’ service ; few besides the leisured and relatively well-to-do can come then.

<sup>2</sup>The treatise reminds us, for instance, that innovation in modes of worship is no new and sinister feature of the 20th century : for the place of the Holy Spirit in public worship, as represented in the doxology or the *Veni Creator*, was once as hotly challenged in the Church as any of the most disputed devotions of to-day. St. Basil was accused of introducing innovations of doctrine under the guise of worship ; but he had little difficulty in showing that the doxology he favoured not only expressed what the Church had always believed, but provided also a bulwark against the dangers of Sabellianism. He was charged with departing from long-standing custom : he replied that the prescription of custom could not be pleaded on one side only, and that he did not introduce but already found what he defended. He claimed that the new was not to supplant but to supplement the old. He appealed for peace in the Church on the

The due attunement of the *lex orandi* and the *lex credendi*, and the guidance of the former by the latter, is a task which is never easy and never finished ; for the spirit of prayer is always finding new moulds for its self-expression. What we are dealing with in the demand for the extra-liturgical use of the reserved Sacrament is a spontaneous prompting of the heart arising out of the common Eucharistic experience. It is not universal among communicants, nor even widespread ; but it is real. Nor does it involve any alteration in the commonly accepted interpretation of the Eucharist, nor suggest that the purpose of Christ's Presence then is other than that believers may come to Him and appropriate Him in Communion. On the contrary, to this appropriation and fellowship the Eucharistic Gifts are in themselves, by reason of what they are, the great call and invitation ; and that is their primary end and significance. Nevertheless, because they are a call to that closest and most intimate union which is involved in Communion, they are for some people a call also to acts of devotion of a less complete, though not therefore of a less genuine, kind—to prayer and thanksgiving, to adoration and intercession ; and it is these secondary purposes which are emphasized when the reserved Sacrament becomes a focus for devotion. Those who so value it do so because they have found by experience that they are thus brought near to the ascended and once crucified Lord ; and out of that experience arises the demand we are considering.

An experience of such a kind is clearly something which may prove of great value to the Church as a whole ; and the task of Anglican theology is to endeavour to keep it pure from the crude alloys which so often attach themselves to devotion and to integrate it with the general life of the Church. This will mean safeguards in respect both of teaching and of practice. Of the former—and they are far the most vital—something will be said later in this

basis of mutual toleration. In short, though by no means decrying the importance of exactness in devotional expression, St. Basil contends that the best and not the worst construction shall be put on unfamiliar forms of it, and that the criterion of Truth in Worship shall be interpreted in a large and liberal spirit.

chapter : the latter may be touched upon here. And in forming a mind and policy on the subject, Anglicanism has the advantage of being able to learn from the past. On the one side, for example, we can take warning from the disastrous consequences which accrue, as Bishop Creighton used to point out, when ecclesiastical authority is unable to control popular devotion—consequences which have been reaped only too often both in the Eastern and the Western Churches. On the other, we may take to heart the sterility produced in the Church of England in the 18th century through a lack of sympathy on the part of its leaders with “the manifestations of the Spirit” accompanying the work of Wesley and the Evangelicals. What we need to do, in short, is first to understand and interpret the experience, as a necessary pre-condition of guarding against the possible dangers. And the chief of these is not that believers should pray too much or be too full of love for their Lord, but that emphasis on the sacramental Presence should obscure the equal truth of Christ’s Presence in the whole of His creation, in the individual conscience and in the Church as a whole.

The true solution of a problem of this kind would seem to lie in the *jus liturgicum* of the bishops. It belongs to the bishop’s office to be in touch with the devotional needs of his clergy and people, and to guide and regulate their expression. A living authority of this kind can do more than any rubric to ensure that the Church’s rule and proportion of prayer are not compromised by what is one-sided, sensational, or bizarre. And this is especially the case when a bishop consults his clergy in synod on matters of this kind ; for then individuals feel the influence of the corporate mind of their brethren in the ministry, while the bishop himself has clear and first-hand information as to the meaning and purpose of what he is asked to allow. A bishop’s admonitions given upon such a basis come, therefore, with a peculiar force. They do not commit the Church as a whole to approval of any innovations put forward for sanction ; but they enable these to be tested and tried without prejudice, and valuable

experience can thus be gained. The question whether or not the result would be, tentatively and under careful restrictions, to allow corporate devotions in connexion with the reserved Sacrament is of less importance than the fact that a procedure would have been adopted which was supple enough for the matter in hand and gave due weight to every point of view among the brethren ; while individual cases of disobedience, if such were found, could not be mistaken for examples of courage or zeal. On the other hand, a principle of Catholic order would be asserted, resting upon clear apostolic teaching<sup>1</sup> and frequently cited by our Reformation divines ; and its application would provide the surest guarantee that the whole proportion of faith to which the Church of England witnesses would not be endangered by undue emphasis on any one of its parts.

(c) The third feature in modern Anglicanism which seems to portend in it a capacity for combining once more the sundered elements of English religion is the development of the Religious Orders. The point which I wish here to emphasize is not the invaluable work which they have done and are doing—as in education, in the care of children or old people, in the restoration of the fallen, and in all the activities of the interior life—work which one can say without hesitation would not otherwise be done : my concern is rather in another direction, namely, with the reaction of the Religious Life upon the problem of reconstruction at home. This reaction is at its strongest in the Contemplative Orders, whose one purpose is the vocation of prayer ; but it is none the less a characteristic of any kind of monasticism. The phenomenon presented is that of a corporate religious life at once connected with, and yet independent of, the ordinary institutional life of the Church as a whole. The motive for this differentiation, moreover, is the deliberate quest of those highest and most direct forms of the knowledge of God which are only vouchsafed to those who renounce everything for them. The quest, that is to say, involves the adoption of a scale of values which sets it

<sup>1</sup> e.g., 1 Cor. xiv. 32

at odds not only with the world, but also with the normal functions of the Church in the world. It must withdraw from the normal machinery, and create its own, if it is to make its true witness to the Supernatural. It is, therefore, not only anti-secular, but also "anti-clerical."

There is no need to illustrate this tendency from the experience of the Middle Ages: the constant disharmony and friction between monks and seculars, abbots and bishops, is well known. It may, however, be observed that the reasons for this disharmony are at bottom the same as those which accounted for the separation of Nonconformity from the Church. What led Fox and Bunyan and Wesley into Nonconformity was the fact that their intense spiritual experience could not find corporate expression in the uniform mould of the Anglican system of that time. The suppleness of the mediæval Church organization had left room for group-expressions of the spiritual life which were independent of the parochial, and to some extent of the diocesan, administration, and yet had retained their *nexus* with the Catholic body as a whole. The result was that Walter Hilton remained a loyal son of the Church, while George Fox appeared a rebel. And yet they were not fundamentally different men. The same accents of first-hand spiritual experience sound in *The Scale of Perfection* as in George Fox's *Journal*, the same supremacy of interest in holy things, and the same desire for fellowship in them. But the flexible organization of mediæval Anglicanism was in sharp contrast to its regimentation in the ages that followed the Reformation; and this contrast provides one important clue to the subsequent dismemberment of English religion.

The modern revival and expansion of the Religious Life in the Church of England, therefore, should go far towards removing one potent cause of schism in the past; for it tends towards the substitution of unity of organism for uniformity of organization, and teaches us that there are types of religious experience which cannot be sufficiently provided for within the parochial system. But that is not all. It also indicates an attitude of mind towards those

who have grown up in those traditions which are now separated from the English Church. It reminds us that we should regard them as above all inheritors of a real spiritual experience. And this attitude seems to me as truly expressed in the resolutions of the last Lambeth Conference on the interchange of pulpits as it is gravely compromised in much that is said about the validity of Nonconformist orders. The whole discussion of the latter issue is surely alien to the genius of Nonconformity, and involves a positive interest in the form of ecclesiastical organization which the first seceders never felt. The leaders of English Puritanism did not leave the Church for "ministerial parity": one might almost conjecture that they knew their New Testaments too well. What they did leave it for was the vision of a larger Christian fellowship than the parochial system—which was then all there was—could ever afford.

And by the same token the permission to Nonconformist ministers, who are working towards such an ideal as the Lambeth Appeal envisages—an ideal combining unity in faith and order with variety of jurisdiction—to preach from time to time from Anglican pulpits is surely to be welcomed. What it implies is a deliberate recognition by the Church of England of the claim that the religious experience which the visiting preacher represents is a valid experience of supernatural Reality. It means recognizing grace where we see it. It does not imply any blindness to the hampering conditions under which that grace has to function in a divided Christendom. Nor does it mean belittling the larger charity of Catholic unity into which it must develop, before it can be said to make faith perfect in works. The very security, indeed, that we feel in our own place in that unity and in its sacramental expression should make us ready to welcome those who, while they do not go all the way with us, yet at least go a large part. In the life of Nonconformity as in the case of extra-liturgical devotions we are brought in contact with particular manifestations of the Spirit which are not for all, but for some; and the same motive that makes me desire to see a Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament in every Cathedral makes me desire

also that a Chapel should be set apart in each for the prayers of the Puritans.

(3) REASON.

Plato in the *Phædrus* compared the soul to a chariot drawn by two horses called High Spirit and Appetite, with Reason as their charioteer. Provided we ignore the fact that in the Platonic myth the horse Appetite is naturally evil in disposition, we may find an analogy here with that macrocosm of the soul which the Church is meant to be; tradition and experience being the steeds of the chariot, and reason holding the reins. Not all, perhaps, would agree with this description of the Anglican "proportion of faith"; some would wish to set tradition, others experience, in the driver's seat. Yet further study of the analogy will perhaps diminish the objections felt. The chariot is the Church, and contains within it the Gospel, which it is to carry in militant warfare through the world<sup>1</sup>; and there is no question of supplanting the Truth of God by any work or activity of man. Nevertheless this truth depends upon man for its defence and its propagation; and it is in regard to that work that we may regard reason as the charioteer. And no other but reason can take that place without peril. Set tradition there, and put reason in the traces; and all her own instincts for the right road will be constantly subject to the sharp tug-back of the rein. Or let experience have the seat, and the pace will be such that first tradition and then reason will be exhausted. But reason is made for the part. Like a good charioteer, she knows her horses, feels their every movement, sympathizes with the temper of each; tightens or slackens rein in prevision of what they will ask; remembers their history and what they have done before. But more: she knows, too, the road by which they travel, what is true, and what is treacherous in its surface, where good grazing is to be had by its side, where are its dangers and where there is good stabling. Above all, she knows better than they the infinite value of the treasure in the

<sup>1</sup>cf. 2 Cor. ii. 14.

chariot—knows it to be not only for herself, but for all the world ; cherishes it in the valleys and dull stretches of the journey no less than on its hill-tops ; and notes how many of the passers-by are seeking it, even though their eyes be averted or downcast. Or—to drop the metaphor—it is reason that must interpret tradition and order experience and relate both to the whole *corpus* of human knowledge.

Anglican theology has expressed this function of reason in the proportion of faith by what it terms “the appeal to sound learning” ; and it is important to understand what is meant by so distinctive a phrase. Sound learning does not mean simply sacred learning, though that is naturally predominant ; nor does it mean only learning about the past, though the past inevitably provides a larger field for it than the present. What it does mean is positive knowledge, first of the Scriptures and their meaning, then of Christian dogma, doctrine, and institutions, and finally of such parts of secular thought and history, whether ancient or modern, as touch this knowledge at any point. This learning can be counterfeited in more ways than one. It is counterfeited, when it becomes purely antiquarian and reckons its duty discharged if it has produced a *catena* of patristic references. It is counterfeited again, and more gravely, when it endeavours to hide a real ignorance of Catholic theology under pretentious generalizations drawn from sources independent of the Christian Faith. But neither of these is characteristic of the Anglican appeal. By sound learning it means something thorough, detailed, and positive ; penetrating beyond words to meanings ; and chary of passing judgment until it has understood.

Further, the appeal to sound learning implies certain presuppositions commonly called philosophical. It assumes, that is to say, that there is a real knowledge of God to be had, and that reason can gain it. It thus joins issue at once with that philosophy which is so impressed by the failure of the intellect to compass all the ends of Truth that it recoils either into scepticism or into such a use of authority as is exemplified in Newman or in Mansel. The claim is

not merely that reason is as much able to reach knowledge in the subject-matter of theology as in that of science ; though that would be much. Rather, it insists that reason is something larger than intellect ; it not only measures and classifies, but intuitively apprehends and discerns ; it contains within itself faith. The exercise of reason is thus a religious act, whatever be the kind of knowledge sought ; for it is that in man which enables him to apprehend Reality, and so marks him out as made in the Image of God.<sup>1</sup>

Reason exhibits two distinct yet complementary functions in Anglican theology, which we may call respectively critical and constructive<sup>2</sup>. By the critical reason I understand that activity of mind which is exercised in the work of exact scholarship. Colet and Erasmus may be regarded as its pioneers in England ; their principles were ardently adopted by the Anglican divines of the Reformation period ; and the accurate researches of a Lightfoot or a Bingham in the age following were the counterpart in theology of what Casaubon and Bentley were doing for the classics of Greece and Rome. The tradition thus established has never died ; and a massive output of biblical and patristic texts and commentaries has resulted. The motive of this labour has been the belief that an accurate knowledge of the original documents of the Faith, and particularly of the Scriptures, was indispensable to a just determination of its content. There was a refusal to be satisfied with a traditional system of interpretation, which had led to the intellectual and moral *impasse* of the later Middle Ages ; and the revival of Greek opened new avenues to the understanding of the New Testament and of many of the Fathers.

But it is characteristic of Anglican theology that this critical reason has always been combined with, and balanced

<sup>1</sup>H. S. Holland was a modern prophet of reason in this sense : cf. an article by Canon Wilfrid Richmond in *C. Q. R.*, July, 1924.

<sup>2</sup>Coleridge divided reason into the speculative and the practical, the former being equivalent to the "understanding," while the latter is very similar to reason as interpreted by Canon Scott Holland. Coleridge is not always quite consistent in his usage (cf. *Causes of the Present Conflict of Ideals in the Church of England*, by R. D. Richardson), but I think his distinction is not very different from that which I employ here.

by, an activity of a larger order, which was concerned with the practical issues of the religious life and their vindication to men's minds. The critical reason, left to itself, may easily sink to an intellectual tithing of " mint and anise and cummin," and needs constantly to be recalled to " the weightier matters of the law "; and this is the task of the constructive reason. Its materials are the positive teachings and institutions of Scripture and the Church, and the life of experience and prayer which they embody. What the great tradition of Anglican divinity—from Hooker to Jeremy Taylor, from Sanderson to Butler, from Law to Maurice and the Cambridge Triad and the *Lux Mundi* school—has been concerned to do has been to exhibit the rationality of the Catholic Faith as a whole. Wholeness and rationality are indeed its master-notes. The wholeness is seen in the stedfast refusal to compromise with the partial representations of Christianity which distinguished the sects, and in the positive claim made to be a construction—not, indeed, exhaustive, but in its proportions complete—of the whole system of Catholic truth. The claim, indeed, involves the refusal. It is somewhat of a misfortune that the English language provides us with only one word in which to describe the opposite of two different things—tolerance and toleration; for the political justice of the second of these easily blinds us to the moral dangers of the first, and that rightful " intolerance " to which the custody of Truth obliges men comes to be reckoned as the emblem of a proud or persecuting spirit. Into the historical causes of this we need not enter; but whatever blame for the confusion attaches to Anglicanism in the past, we cannot dispense ourselves from the duties or the unpopularities of a consistent witness. For the Faith we represent is not a compilation, but an organic body of truths; and we dare not enter into any such fellowship with those who represent isolated parts of it as would obscure our witness to the whole.

The second note of this element in Anglican theology is rationality. The appeal to authority is not set aside, but it is balanced by a concurrent appeal to reason; or rather reason is reckoned as one of the factors which

make up the complex system of authority. And reason welcomes these other factors, only approaching them from her own angle ; not seeking to substitute herself for them, but endeavouring to show that they are, and can be demonstrated to be, rational,<sup>1</sup> and expecting that the use the Church makes of them will be affected by her activity. This is a position which the great Schoolmen would not have disowned ; and the view that the existence of God can be proved by the natural reason has been a constant feature of Roman Catholic theology. Nevertheless, it is true to say that since the Council of Trent, and still more since the Vatican decree, there has been a marked divergence of emphasis between Roman and Anglican theology in regard to the function of reason. We might express it by saying that whereas Roman theology tends to regard the authority of the Church as closing a subject, Anglicanism regards it as opening it. The Roman Catholic view is, broadly speaking, that a thing is true merely because the Church teaches it ; the Anglican that the Church teaches it, because it is true. And this latter view opens the subject, because it invites the reason to enquiry and demonstration. There are not two kinds of truth, one for reason and another for faith, but rather one kingdom of truth embracing both Nature and Supernature ; and reason is at home in both parts of it. A classical illustration may be found in Bishop Butler's sermon, *On Resentment*—an example all the more striking because it is concerned not with historical facts but with moral teaching, and that teaching given by our Lord Himself. And the purport of the sermon is not to bring home to the heart the necessity of obeying the command of Jesus, but to demonstrate to the reason that His moral teaching on the forgiveness of enemies is true, and why it is so. That is an inversion of the mental process usually found not only in sermons but only too often in theological writing generally. But its effect is very far from belittling the sovereign authority of Christ. On the contrary, it enhances that authority by showing it to be consonant with the highest dictates of our moral

<sup>1</sup> cf. R. D. Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

reason,<sup>1</sup> and compels us to say of Him who first gave this teaching :

" Lord, to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Finally, it may be observed that the place of reason in the Anglican "proportion of faith" gives it a peculiar claim to the title of Catholic. For in theology, as in the other sciences, reason knows no frontiers of race or country, but is the prerogative of man wheresoever he lives. And the exercise of reason is essentially a co-operative and international task<sup>2</sup>. Private judgment, so often claimed as the exercise of reason, is in fact its very negation ; for reason, though it is an activity of the individual soul, depends for the validity of its results on the certification of others. Neither is reason Protestant. Protestantism exhibits the isolation and development of one function of reason—the critical—at the expense of the constructive. Reacting from the moral and intellectual inconsistency of mediæval Catholicism, it abandoned that wholeness of truth which is represented in Catholic tradition and experience and which is the indispensable material for the constructive reason in theology ; and its attempts to demonstrate the rationality of the residual portions which it kept have not unnaturally led to a gradual wastage of these, until little of supernatural religion now remains. That is the situation which Otto's *Das Heilige* was an endeavour to remedy in the country of Luther, and which has prompted the strange and hopeless reaction known as Fundamentalism in the United States of America. But reason, as Anglican theology understands it, does not abandon the idea of the body or "deposit" of the Faith ; rather

<sup>1</sup>It is interesting to find an experienced French director, the late Mgr. d'Hulst, writing in a similar sense (*The Way of the Heart*, Eng. trans. p. 133) :

"What is conscience ? It is the rule of right within us. What is Jesus ? He is the rule of right without us. And these two rules are but one, and the rule within testifies to the rule without, and cries out : *Vere filius Dei es !*"

<sup>2</sup>A striking example of this has recently been afforded in connexion with the new (ninth) edition of Liddell & Scott's Greek Lexicon.—See the *Times Literary Supplement* for March 12, 1925.

the Anglican reformation represents reason, not deserting the Catholic tradition, but revising it ; not repudiating Catholic experience, but purifying it. And, when it functions so, reason can make a universal claim. Like Wisdom :

In the top of high places by the way,  
Where the paths meet, she standeth ;  
Beside the gates, at the entry of the city,  
At the coming in of the doors, she crieth aloud :  
Unto you, O men, I call,  
And my voice is to the sons of men.<sup>1</sup>

Hooker powerfully describes this catholicity of reason when he says of its laws that they are " in such sort investigable, that the knowledge of them in general, the world hath always been acquainted with them. . . . It is not agreed upon by one, or two, or few, but by all. Which we may not so understand, as if every particular man in the whole world did know and confess whatsoever the Law of Reason doth contain ; but this Law is such that being proposed no man can reject it as unreasonable and unjust. Again, there is nothing in it but any man (having natural perfection of wit and ripeness of judgment) may by labour and travail find out. And to conclude, the general principles thereof are such, as it is not easy to find men ignorant of them, Law rational therefore, which men commonly use to call the Law of Nature, meaning thereby the Law which human nature knoweth itself in reason universally bound unto, which also for that cause may be termed most fitly the Law of Reason ; this Law, I say, comprehendeth all those things which men by the light of their natural understanding evidently know, or at leastwise may know, to be beseeming or misbeseeming, virtuous or vicious, good or evil for them to do."<sup>2</sup>

To sum up. The distinctive witness of Anglican theology is to " a proportion of faith," in which tradition, experience, and reason are duly compounded. It is a coherent mental construction of the whole fact and " idea " of Christianity, which it purports to represent more justly than either the

<sup>1</sup>Prov. viii. 2-4.

<sup>2</sup>L. E. P. I. viii. 9.

East or Rome. It accepts tradition like the East, but it tests and verifies it by the light of reason. It admits the Protestant claim for the sacredness of spiritual experience both in the individual and in the autonomous group, and provides for it in its recovered life of prayer and sacrament ; but it cannot jeopardize its testimony to the wholeness of Christian truth by acquiescing in the view that the confessions and organizations to which Protestantism has given birth are other than sectional. It agrees with the scholastics in the appeal to reason, but insists as against Rome that this reason is critical as well as constructive, and that the plea of authority can never be a substitute for, but needs at every point to be certified by, the demonstration of the rationality of the Faith. It is thus, in the full sense of both parts of the word, Anglo-Catholic : Catholic in its grasp of the wholeness and rationality of the truth, English in its love of freedom and its reverence for spiritual reality.

The opening of the second quarter of the 20th century offers the Church of England opportunities of spiritual development and of moral witness which can have but few parallels even in her long and chequered history. We can feel the set of that

Tide in the affairs of men,  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune ;  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life  
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.

The re-orientation of political opinion since the war has brought it about that the old politico-religious alliances have been dissolved. Churchmen and Nonconformists alike are to be found in all three political parties ; while the emergence of socialism as a doctrine of the State tends inevitably to force religion to closer and more disciplined forms of expression. The effect of this has been to remove old barriers and reveal new duties. The removal of old barriers is signalized in the far-reaching change in the

constitutional position of the English Church, which is embodied in the Enabling Act ; and already long-standing arrears of administrative reform have been overtaken. The new duties are revealed in the increasing dissatisfaction which men feel with what is purely individualistic or sectarian in religion ; and the desire for a larger and more Catholic fellowship has awakened the vision of Reunion. The maintenance in such circumstances of a presentation of Christianity which rests on a delicate balance and proportion of truth is obviously a task of formidable difficulty. Those who believe that the maintenance of this proportion is vital to the future of English Christianity may well pause to consider how the difficulty may be met.

Two, and only two, methods would seem to be available to those in authority. One of these was tried in the last century, and has had to be abandoned. The resort to the law courts, if it produced some legal judgments that were of value, was at best a clumsy expedient for the settling of spiritual issues ; and few now would advocate a return to it. A large section of the Church repudiates the principles on which it rested ; while even its defenders would scarcely deny that in practice it defeated its own ends. At the same time it is clear that some means of upholding the teaching and discipline of the English Church is necessary, if its distinctive character is not to be dissolved into an anarchic Romanism at one end and an equally anarchic Protestantism at the other. The question is what that means is to be.

I wish, at the conclusion of this book, to urge that the true solution lies in education. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned ; and the teaching of error can in the last resort only be met by the teaching of the truth. The Church itself cannot be what Coleridge called “ an intellectual as well as spiritual commonwealth ” except at the price of deliberate effort and by the pursuit of a definite policy. And what we have to deal with to-day is a very serious decay of learning among the clergy. The chief cause of this lies in circumstances over which the clergy have no control—I mean the fact that, as the population has

increased and the number of clergy has diminished, each priest has less leisure for reading than was the case formerly ; while the expense of books or libraries has been beyond the means of very many. But be the cause what it may, the result is swift and inevitable. The mind starves when it is not fed ; gregariousness and an unthinking zeal usurp the throne of knowledge ; and it is felt more important to teach what is exciting than to teach what is true.

And the remedy can only lie in education. One of the most serious symptoms of the present position is perhaps to be found in the growing, and largely unchallenged, tendency to subordinate all the interests of the Church's life to the supposed exigencies of administration ; and the interests of knowledge—always a delicate plant—are among the first to suffer. It is a narrow view of administration which supposes that the fellowship found and felt in devotional or administrative gatherings is the only kind of spiritual fellowship with which the Church as such is concerned. It is not frequency of concourse, but its quality and variety that gives life to men. Truth and Beauty are focal points of Christian fellowship no less than Goodness; and the fostering of them is as much an obligation of the Church.

And this will mean the choice, training, and setting apart of men to do the work. "What shall become of that commonwealth or Church in the end," says Hooker, "which hath not the eye of learning to beautify, guide, and direct it?"<sup>1</sup> He goes on to speak of "bishoprics" as the chief hope of the maintenance of learning. But, though some of the English bishops to-day afford shining examples to the contrary, we cannot expect them personally to do for learning to-day, when practical duties are overwhelming, what they did "in the spacious days of Queen Elizabeth." What we can ask, and expect, is that "the eye of learning" shall be reckoned a true *oculus episcopi*, and its function recognized in the vision which authority takes of the needs of the Church. In other words, what

<sup>1</sup>L. E. P. VII. xxiv. 19.

we need is the organization, under episcopal sanction and encouragement, of a Teaching Order and of instructional "schools" charged with the promotion of sound learning among both clergy and laity.

The Church, it may be observed, is at present far behind other professions in its care for the intellectual efficiency of its officers. The modern doctor, for example, thinks it part of his duty from time to time to "walk the hospitals," and to bring his knowledge up to date by recourse to direct instruction from those who are abreast of progress. In the noble profession of arms, once regarded as the pastime of the well-to-do, a series of courses in the theory of its various branches is now a normal duty for officers of most ranks; and promotion is frequently dependent upon the results of examinations. Something has been done, it is true, to achieve analogous ends in the Church by the extension of Retreats, which are more and more coming to be regarded as part of the annual duties of a priest. But it is impossible to maintain that Retreats alone suffice for the efficient equipment of those whose commission it is to teach and preach. Growth in knowledge and wisdom has its own laws and methods distinct from those of growth in holiness, calling equally for corporate work, for the living voice, and for personal contact between mind and mind. Yet that is a side of our Church life in England which is now very seriously neglected.<sup>1</sup> Is it surprising if Anglicanism, which depends for its vitality upon the appeal to sound learning, should seem to many to be in danger of losing its identity?

I do not think that there is ground for pessimism, provided that the problem is fairly faced. The new Liberal Evangelical movement in the Church is definitely setting the encouragement of study in the forefront of its programme. On the Anglo-Catholic side, one of the aims of the congresses and conventions held in recent years has been the spread of

<sup>1</sup> I do not forget the admirable work done by the Central Society for Sacred Study and the Vacation Schools for Clergy held at Oxford and Cambridge, etc. The serious fact is that the proportion of clergy, and especially of the younger men, reached in this way is very small, and will surely continue to be so until the problem is tackled on more thorough-going lines, as one that concerns the Church as a whole.

instruction among both clergy and laity ; and it is only a very superficial judgment which supposes that the vocal obscurantism of a few is typical of the movement as a whole. On the contrary, careful learning and liberal thinking are widely distributed in this school, and there is an earnest demand for advance in intellectual equipment and for growth in knowledge. It is for those in place of authority to consider how they may satisfy the demand, and by a bold policy of higher education vindicate afresh in the minds of the faithful and in the eyes of the world that proportion of faith which is distinctive of the Church of England.

THE END



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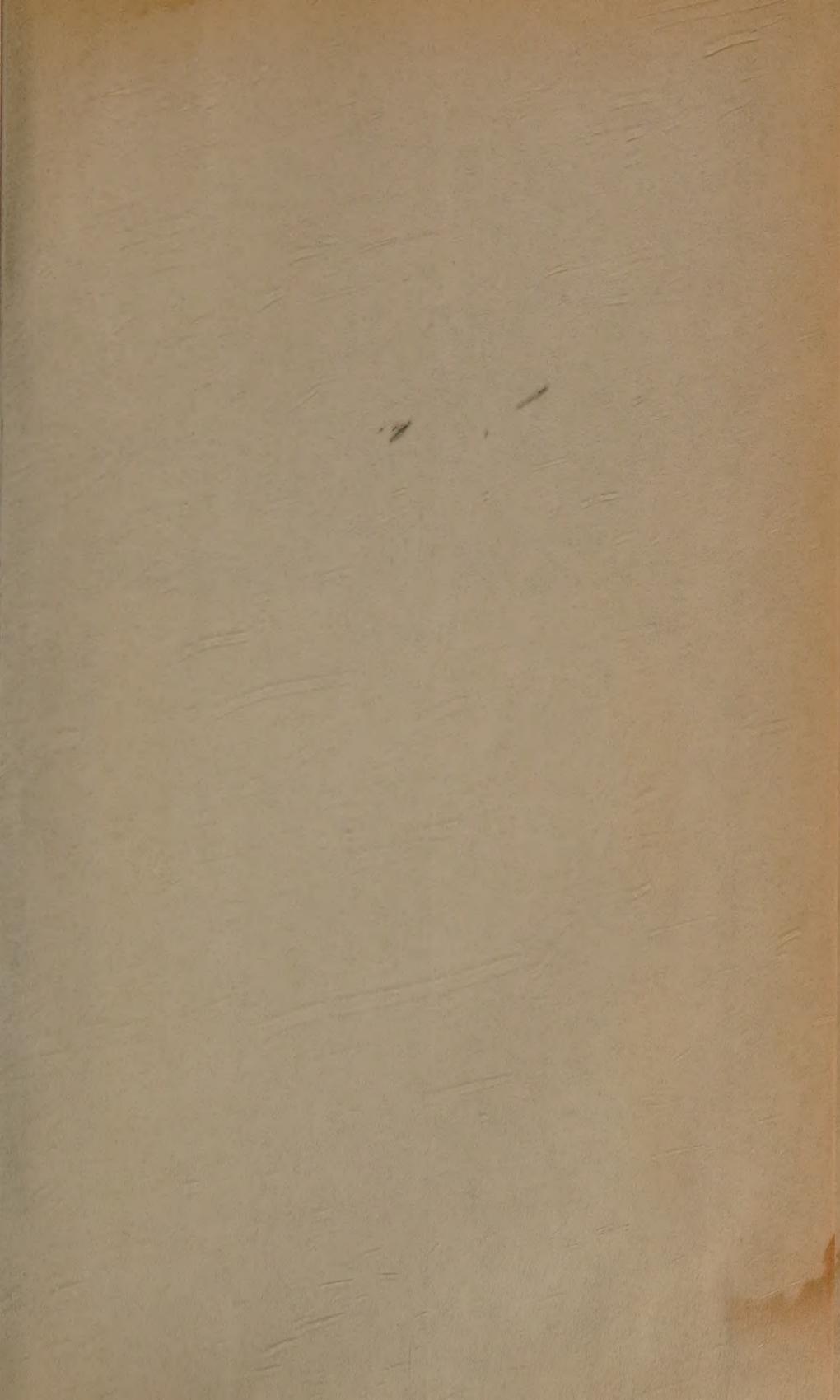
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